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**FOCUS**  
MIDWEST

67

# Revolution in America



## "A Decent Way of Life for All Men"

"Teamsters Local 688 is proud that its Labor-Management Charitable Foundation was able to sponsor, in collaboration with FOCUS/Midwest, the highly significant competition which resulted in this special issue.

"From the time of the submission of the so-called *Triple Revolution Report* by a distinguished Ad Hoc Committee, it was apparent that the most crucial issues in our society had been delineated in a unique way. It was a major contribution to the deliberative processes of our democratic society.

"The historic Report (which is also reprinted in this issue) brought into focus some of the most disturbing complexities of our society in the cybernetic age and some of the most challenging possibilities for the good life in an age of abundance.

"At the same time, it could only be a beginning of dialogue on the points it raised, an invitation to further discourse.

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Volume V, Number 37

## THE AWARDS

The following nine essays have been awarded prizes by the judges of the "National Study on the Triple Revolution Report."

The purpose of the study was to evaluate the findings of the *Triple Revolution Report*, analyze societal values in terms of the Report, and recommend public measures which would overcome disorders forecast in the Report.

The five judges of the essay contest were Professor William Gomberg of the Wharton School of Finance and Commerce, University of Pennsylvania; Michael Harrington of the League of Industrial Democracy; Professor Robert J. Havighurst of the University of Chicago; Professor Irving Louis Horowitz of Washington University; and Professor Irvin Sobel of Florida State University.

The prizes were \$1,000 for the first award, \$300 each for the two second awards, and \$100 each for all other essays published.

	Page
FIRST AWARD	
"Automation and Utopia" by R. L. Cunningham	4
SECOND AWARDS	
"Prologue to a Manifesto—For a Revolution Without One" by Anthony J. Morley	11
"Social Research and the Triple Revolution" by Herbert C. Kelman	14
AWARDS OF MERIT	
"Marx and the Triple Revolution: Two Alternatives to the Commercial Civilization" by Jon Johanning	19
"Poverty is not Unemployment" by William A. Martin	24
"The Case for Public Works" by Gayle Southworth	27
"The Key: People Power" by Lowell Livezey	30
"Assault from the Left: A Marxian Critique" by John Hartwell Moore	35
"Can 'Cyberculture' Satisfy Human Needs?" by Fiona St. John	38
APPENDIX	
Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on The Triple Revolution	42



"Those who expect modern technology to effect in the near future drastic changes in the American way of life are mistaken for two basic reasons: human wants and needs for goods and services are far from being satiated and a few more automated factories will hardly satisfy these wants; second, automated machinery is expensive: to automate completely only the manufacturing segment of the economy would cost two and a half trillion dollars. 'Work,' in its usual sense of producing goods or services that people are willing to pay for, will not go out of fashion in the foreseeable future; for better or worse a man's work will continue to be a major factor in determining his status in American society. Consequently, all who wish to help the poor had best put forward their efforts to improving the productivity of the poor: the poor and minorities are ill served by those who would look to an automated utopia to solve all the problems of poverty and status."



Robert  
L.  
Cunningham

## AUTOMATION AND UTOPIA

By R. L. CUNNINGHAM

Robert Louis Cunningham is an associate professor of philosophy at the University of San Francisco. He is also the recipient of a post-graduate Interdisciplinary Research grant from the Institute for Interdisciplinary Research (St. Thomas Aquinas Foundation) for research at the University of California, Berkeley, (1967-68). He has taught at Xavier University, Cincinnati, Ohio (1951-53), at San Francisco College for Women (1953-58), and was a visiting professor at Rockford (Ill.) College and at Queens College, New York City. He has been a contributor to Classics of Catholic Literature, New Catholic Encyclopedia, Philosophy in An Age of Christian Renewal, and other works. His articles have appeared in New Individualist Review, Modern Age, Pacific Philosophy Forum, Analysis, New Scholasticism, Mind, and other publications. He was born in Birmingham, Alabama, in 1926, received his A.B. from St. Gregory Seminary, Cincinnati, Ohio, and his Ph.D. in 1951 from Laval University, Quebec, Canada. He is married and has eight children.

There will be mistakes at first as there are in all changes. All young ladies will imagine . . . that they will be instantly married. Schoolboys believe that Gerunds and Supines will be abolished, and that Current Tarts must ultimately come down in price; The Corporal and the Sergeant are sure of double pay; bad Poets will expect a demand for their Epics . . .

Sydney Smith on the Reform Act of 1830

If a man says in magnificent language 'O let us all be happy and good!', if he paints a utopia in eulogistic terms with very great artistic beauty, many readers cannot believe that the means which he proposes for realizing his utopia could possibly lead in fact to horrible consequences.

Richard Robinson

In the nearly three years since *The Triple Revolution* was released, the interest generated by this document signed by thirty-four prominent American intellectual leaders who have demonstrated high moral concern over our "American Way of Life" has had remarkable impact. Mainly an analysis of the relation between automation and employment, it seems already to have come to be regarded as a benchmark for proposals to help the poor or to solve the unemployment problem.

### Cybernation Revolution

The authors of this document concern themselves almost exclusively with the Cybernation Revolution. The

United States, we are told, has been operating on the thesis that every person will be able to obtain a job if he wishes to do so and that this job will provide him with resources adequate to live and maintain a family decently. But jobs are disappearing under the impact of highly efficient, progressively less costly machines. In the developing cybernated system, potentially unlimited output can be achieved by systems of machines which will require little cooperation from human beings. As machines take over production from men, they absorb an increasing proportion of resources while the men who are displaced become dependent on government welfare measures. Our present industrial system was designed to produce an ever-increasing quantity of goods as efficiently as possible and it was assumed that the distribution of the power to purchase these goods would occur almost automatically. But this is no longer a tenable assumption; our major economic problem today is not how to increase production, but how to distribute the abundance which is the great potential of cybernation. The continuance of the income-through-jobs link as a mechanism for distributing effective demand now acts as the main brake on the almost unlimited capacity of a cybernated productive system; for our present industrial and social system is based on scarcity and cannot deal with the facts of abundance produced by cybernation. And so we have rising and excessive unemployment, the underlying cause of which is the fact that the capability of machines is rising more rapidly than the capacity of many human beings to keep pace. But might not the private enterprise

sector of the economy keep pace with cybernation? No. Job creation in the private sector has almost entirely ceased except in services. Cybernation at last forces us to answer the historic question: What is man's role when he is not dependent upon his own activities for the material basis of his life? What should be the basis for distributing individual access to national resources? Are there other proper claims on goods and services besides a job?

Not the least of our troubles occurs over definitions. We have been using a language based on a theoretical understanding of what is really, today, a rapidly disappearing economic system, and to retain our present definitions of "work," "leisure," "play," and "affluence" is as mistaken as it would be to retain Newtonian definitions of key terms in physics or pre-Darwinian definitions of key terms in biology. One might once have been justified in regarding an unemployed person as lazy, unlucky, indolent, and trustworthy—but no longer! Such an implicit definition of "unemployed" is as outmoded as the economic system it reflects. Once we become aware that perhaps 10 per cent of the population will shortly be able to produce all the goods and services needed by the nation, shall we continue to regard the other 90 per cent in the same light in which we viewed yesterday's 4 or 5 per cent unemployed? The question answers itself.

Now just what are we to do about the fact that under the impact of cybernation the traditional link between jobs and income is being broken? One can no longer have any reasonable hope that *ad hoc* government welfare measures—public works, "poverty programs," and the like—can do any more than temporarily alleviate some superficial symptoms: this is the massage and Band-Aid approach. We need solutions that are more fundamental. We must redefine "work"—so that a man's right to an income will no longer depend on the production of goods and services for which others are willing to pay. We must pay people who do no work—in the old-fashioned sense of "work." Society must, through its appropriate legal and governmental institutions, undertake an unqualified commitment to provide every individual with an adequate income as a matter of right.

We shall in addition, of course, need to introduce democratic planning by public bodies for the general welfare a network of agencies through which pass the stated needs of the people at every level of society, agencies which can smooth the transition from a society based on scarcity to a society based on affluence the abundant society. Only in this way can men be unshackled from the bonds of unfulfilling labor, to become citizens, to make themselves their own history.

Thus speak the thirty-two signers of *The Triple Revolution*.

An unsympathetic critic might, of course, simply dismiss this analysis and these proposals as utopian. After all, millenarians, Marxists, and other chiliastic sects have made similar analyses and proposals for generations. As Jacques Ellul sums it up in his *The Technological Society*: "By the end of the nineteenth century people saw in their grasp the moment in which everything would be at the disposal of everyone, in which man, replaced by machines, would have only pleasures and play."

But we have in *The Triple Revolution* something far beyond the visions of say, a Fourier who foresaw a future in which

all harmful beasts will have disappeared, and in their places will be animals which will assist man in his labours—or even do

his work for him. An anti-beaver will see to the fishing; an anti-whale will move sailing ships in a calm; an anti-hippopotamus will tow the river boats . . . a great central electric plant will by its power do all the mechanical labour . . . with no more than a few hours of daily work (men) will thus be free to occupy themselves with developing their intellectual, moral, and artistic faculties to an extent hitherto unprecedented in history.

Far more relevant is the testimony of Norbert Wiener, the father of cybernetics:

Let us remember that the automatic machine, whatever we think of any feelings it may have or not have, is the precise economic equivalent of slave labor. Any labor which competes with slave labor must accept the economic conditions of slave labor. It is perfectly clear that this will produce an unemployment situation, in comparison with which the present recession and the depression of the Thirties will seem a pleasant joke.

In what follows I should like, first, to make some general comments on the nature of work in the United States and on the call for a "redefinition of work;" next I should like to raise a question or two about the so-called "economy of abundance;" thirdly, I shall wonder out loud about the nature of cybernation, and the nature of the "cybernation revolution;" fourthly, I shall look into the crystal ball and attempt to get a balanced picture of what the future of cybernation is likely to be; and finally I shall conclude with some remarks on the proposal that Americans be given a constitutional right to a guaranteed income.

### Work and Leisure

One of the first things to note is that although Americans have become wealthier and wealthier, we take only part of our increased productivity in more goods and services; another part is taken in population increase (1½ per cent as compared with Western Europe's 1 per cent); a third part of our increased productivity has been taken in leisure, freetime: in his recent *Religion and Leisure in America*, Dr. Robert Lee has estimated that over the past half century, as life expectancy has been extended and the work-week has contracted, the average American has added "something like 22 more years of leisure to his life." In the non-governmental sector of the American economy, the average productivity of labor has approximately doubled in the past 25 years. Ignoring population increase, it appears that the benefits of increased productivity have been taken by the worker on roughly a 60/40 basis of distribution between income and leisure, that is, 60 per cent of the increase in productivity has been taken in higher wages and 40 per cent in shorter hours of work, in more leisure. Should the same rate of productivity and the same rate of distribution of benefits continue, a 30-hour workweek may be in the picture in another 25 years—and in manufacturing it may occur even earlier. We should then have reached what the world has always considered a utopia as regards hours of work: for in Thomas More's own *Utopia*, the inhabitants worked only 6 hours a day. (To be sure, should there be a compulsory shortening of hours with no reduction of wage rates to market levels, institutional unemployment will result, for shortening hours of work has the effect of intensifying the scarcity of capital goods.)

Now when it is asked why Americans work even as hard as they do when they have so very much, part of the answer lies in the fact that rewards are so high for so small a cost of pain and effort: because work in America buys so very large a basket of goods, the attractiveness of leisure is diminished and relatively less leisure is bought. The phenomenon of the "over-time hog" which so surprises Sebastian de Grazia in his book, *Of Time, Work and Leisure*, (he says there is an analogy between

the “generosity” shown by an employer’s favoring someone by giving him overtime work and the “generosity” shown by a teacher who favors his best pupils by keeping them after school to write on the blackboard 100 times: “I have been a good boy”) is understandable when one realizes that what is important is not how wealthy the worker is—the American automobile worker, for example, is wealthier than 98 per cent of the world’s population, and the average American *saves* more each year than the total income of two-thirds of the world’s population—but how high the rewards are for the expenditure of an additional unit of effort.

Gerald Piel wrote, in his famous article, “The End of Toil,” published in the *Nation* in 1961: “Work occupies fewer hours in the lives of everyone; what work there is grows less like work every year . . . . Compared to the day’s work that confronts most of mankind every morning most U.S. citizens are not engaged in work at all.” (Note that by the word “work” Piel means not what is usually meant, the occupation by which a man earns a living, but rather the extraction of raw materials and the making of consumable goods from them.) It is certainly true that the character of the occupations by which Americans earn their living has changed over the past century. In the extractive or primary industries (agriculture, forestry, fishing, and mining) the percentage of the labor force has dropped from 54 per cent to 10 per cent in the past 90 years. The percentage of men employed in manufacturing and construction has, on the other hand, grown from 22 per cent to 32 per cent in the same period, though it now appears to be leveling off, that is to say, as wealth increases the elasticity of demand for fabricated products is less than it once was. Demand is however rapidly increasing in personal service and life-enriching industries; people want to spend a relatively larger proportion of their budget on education, entertainment, travel, medical services, and the like—and employment has more than doubled in these industries in the last 90 years, and now approaches a total of 30 per cent of the labor force.

(In an article in the *Journal of Business* (October 1965), Victor Fuchs reports on trends involved in the shift of employment to services. These include: growing employment opportunities for women and older workers, and for part-time employment and urban self-employment; a growing need for workers with more formal schooling; a possible decreasing importance of unions and growing importance of professional organizations, a possible trend towards greater personalization of work; a growing importance of small firms and of non-profit organizations (public and private); a declining relative importance of physical capital and a growing stability in employment.)

Another fact about the nature of work in the United States is worth a brief note: we have gone from a time, in the early nineteenth century, when 80 per cent of the working population were self-employed enterprisers, to a time, today, when fewer than 20 per cent of the working population is self-employed (and included in this 20 per cent are a large number of farmers dependent on government subsidies). Thus by far the greater part of our population increase in the last 150 years has been made up of those who work for wages. Now one of the great advantages in working for another lies in the fact that when a man has sold only part of his time, only part of himself, for a fixed income, there can be a fairly

sharp distinction between private and business life. In effect, the man who sells his labor for wages is relieved of some of the responsibilities of economic life in return for giving up the chance for a higher income open to one who takes bigger economic risks in his own business. But a consequence of a man’s being relieved of the responsibility of risky decisions, of his being responsible only for a giving a day’s work for a day’s pay, is that if economic disaster in some form does strike his employer, he quite naturally feels that such a disaster is clearly not *his* fault; *he* is not to blame since he has been doing his part and he did not make things go sour. As Robert Engler puts it, “the operative slogan of American life is ‘I just work here’.” The man who works for wages—and he forms the great majority of the electorate—will want to be made secure from economic disaster, will tend to insist on economic security, a security guaranteed by government if that seems to him necessary. (The witches in *Macbeth* warned that “Security is mortals’ chiefest enemy”, but we find this today hard to believe.) And if some of the government activities undertaken fail of their purpose and actually do more overall harm than good, the government welfare sector of the economy will grow enormously, feeding, as it were, on its own failures.

## Redefinition of “Work”

Now with all this as background, let us return to our document. The authors of *The Triple Revolution*, as I have indicated, call for a redefinition of “work” (and also of “leisure,” “scarcity,” “abundance,” and the like.) Now what could a man who says: “Let’s redefine the word ‘x’” possibly mean? One thing that could be meant, for example by a dictionary-maker, is that the range of things referred to by a usual definition of ‘x’ is larger or smaller than the range of things people generally use the word ‘x’ to refer to. But surely the word “work” has not yet changed its scope in this way—a man who does nothing to earn a living is surely said not to be working. Nor is it likely that our Revolutionaries are simply insisting on their own right to use the word “work” in an unfamiliar way, but in a way that pleases *them*. It appears to me rather, that when our authors call for a redefinition of “work,” they are doing two things. They are saying: “Let us retain the laudatory connotation presently attached to ‘work,’ but let us cut it adrift from its present objective reference, its present extension only to men who produce products other men compete to get.” But this would be an unreasonable proposal unless they were also saying implicitly what they also say explicitly: economic theory needs revision. Present economic theory is no longer useful for describing and analyzing our brave new world. And since this is so, our conceptual schemes need rearranging, perhaps in much the same way that certain medieval conceptual schemes needed rearranging when we passed from medieval economy to the modern industrial economy. For with this passage, economic phenomena could no longer usefully be discussed in terms of “just price,” “usury,” “interest,” “surplus,” and the like—as defined in the Middle Ages. These terms, if they were to be useful at all in the modern world, needed to be redefined, for without redefinition one would find it impossible to say what one wanted to say. So when our authors say: “Let’s redefine ‘work’ and ‘leisure,’” they are saying: “Let’s disregard, ignore, cancel out of our thinking certain properties heretofore attached to the

words ‘work’ and ‘leisure,’ for these properties are no longer important or relevant in our world of cybernation. We shall not understand the modern world of abundance unless we develop a new economic theory, with new conceptual schemes, and new definitions of the key terms used to talk about these conceptual schemes.”

## “Scarcity” and “Abundance”

Let us now briefly examine the notion of an “economy of abundance,” for everything that was said about the need for redefinition and out-of-date economics makes sense only in a context, not of scarcity, but of abundance. The thesis we are examining is that cybernation is the instrumentality that will bring the American people from an economy of scarcity to an economy of abundance. But what precisely is the nature of this goal? What would an “economy of abundance” be like if we achieved it? Well, if we use the categories of what we are told is a soon-to-be-outmoded, “pre-Copernican” economics, we can make a distinction between “free” goods and “economic” goods: of the former everyone has as much as he would like to have without sacrificing anything—the classical example is air, a free good for most people most of the time; economic goods are scarce goods, those one would prefer to have more of, those which one cannot get more of without paying a price, without sacrificing some good possessed. In terms of this distinction, one might describe an “economy of abundance” as one in which there are no scarce goods, a world in which everyone has as much of everything as he wants. The world of abundance is one in which, if everyone were to be given, as in fairy tales, three wishes by his fairy godmother, no one would bother to use up his wishes to get more goods and services.

Perhaps a hypothetical example might be useful at this point: suppose cybernation does make possible a doubling, a tripling, a quadrupling of the national output of goods and services—or suppose, for example, that 50 million robots marched out of the bowels of the earth and went to work for no pay other than an occasional squirt of oil on their joints. Suppose the average family income rose from \$7,000 a year to \$50,000 a year—would we then have an “economy of abundance?” No, not as I have defined “economy of abundance”—unless people with \$50,000 a year have all their desires satisfied, which, casual observation leads me to believe, is highly unlikely; it would still be necessary to allocate (choose between alternative satisfactions) and to economize (satisfy desires with the least expenditure of resources), and so there would be no grounds for abandoning traditional economic theory. To be sure, people would be wealthier—but Americans are more than twice as wealthy today than they were a generation ago. So how is cybernation relevant to the problem of economic scarcity? If there would still continue to be scarce goods, it is reasonable to say, as does Mr. Ferry:

Cybernation signifies the opening of the era of abundance. Since economics is the science of the allocation of scarcities, cybernation as the main agent of plenty mandates the reformation of economic theory . . . all of the sciences are burgeoning with fresh approaches to old matters except, alas, the political economic science. Here is the last pre-Copernican stronghold among natural and social scientists, heavily patrolled by economic astrologers and other magistrates of the status quo. The most notable aspect of our world of novelty and rapid change is the unwillingness of economics and political science to perceive it, and their hostility toward those who do. (“Further Reflections on The Triple Revolution,” 1964)

Of course it is true that people who have \$50,000 a year to spend have demand schedules different from those

who have only \$7,000 a year to spend—but do not both have unsatisfied wants (or velleities if you will)? To sum up: if cybernation will bring about an era in which everybody’s wants are satisfied, economists will certainly be out of a job; but if cybernation will only make possible considerably greater wealth, then economists will still find a world of scarcity to analyze and on which to exercise their talents. We have never yet been favored with a world in which even a single person has had all his needs, wants, desires, velleities, and whims satisfied; to expect cybernation to bring about a world in which *everyone* has all his wants satisfied—with the inevitable mutual conflicts of desires—is not only unlikely but logically impossible, given men as we know them. In the Thirties economists talked about the stock of automobiles having satiated the market: everyone in the United States could ride in automobiles at once—there was one car for every five people. Now, of course, there is one car for every three people and the rate is showing no sign of diminishing.

Lewis Mumford once classified utopias as being either utopias of retreat or escape from the world, or utopias looking toward the world’s reconstruction. With all respect, I submit that the notion of an “economy of abundance,” at least presently described, is an element of the former and not of the latter sort of utopia. But saying this is not at all to minimize the impact or the applicability of another of Mumford’s remarks: “Nowhere [Utopia] may be an imaginary country, but News from Nowhere is real news.”

Now I might very well be accused of the fallacy of ignoring the issue by a misinterpretation of what Marx and/or our Triple Revolutionaries have meant by “economy of abundance.” Surely neither is talking about a world in which all goods are free goods. (One might see this by asking whether our Revolutionaries are likely to be resource conservationists or are likely to be frightened by the Malthusian arithmetic of overpopulation—both of which imply scarcity.) Rather what both are saying is that each and every citizen will have all his *needs* satisfied, not that he will have all his *wants* satisfied. Cybernation will give us the power to satisfy not all our wants but all our needs. Now the “logic” of the word need is interesting. If I say “I need x,” there is, by contrast with my saying “I want x,” a connotation of constancy, absoluteness, definiteness, a suggestion that what I say I need is almost physiologically demanded, and a suggestion that costs are irrelevant. I can compare, for instance, my wife’s telling me, “I *want* a new rug” with her saying “We *need* a new rug.” In English we speak not of urgent critical, crying, vital, or essential *wants*—but of urgent, critical, crying, vital, or essential *needs*. To speak then of an economy as potentially capable of satisfying all our “needs” is to imply that there is a constant and unchanging set of goods and services called “our needs” and also that a finite amount of wealth will enable us to satisfy these needs. But as economists point out over and over again, the notion of “need” is not an analytically useful one. We are inclined to *say* that we *need* too many sorts of things, from more protein in our diet or a longer vacation, to a new car, more highways, more and better teachers, more missiles, more water in California. This is to say that “need,” like “want,” is a vague word, *connoting* constancy and definiteness but *denoting* nothing more definite than “want.” “I need” is used persuasively to say “I want.” When someone says: “I (or



more usually, *we*) need *x*," one should, I think, follow Alchian and Allen's suggestion (in their brilliant new textbook *University Economics*) and respond: "You say you need *x*, but in order to achieve what? at what cost of other goods or 'needs?' and at whose cost?" These questions are obviously relevant when someone says "I want *x*;" they are no less relevant when someone says "We need *x*." The only practical way, of course, of distinguishing "wants" and "needs" is to give some authority the power to define what are to be counted as "needs" and what are to be counted only as "wants"—but this course of action has some rather obviously undesirable consequences which need not be discussed here.

Karl Brunner was, I fear, entirely just in his evaluation: "The prophets of the Triple Revolutionary paradise carelessly shift the meaning of their words from 'abundance' as denial of the economist's 'scarcity' to 'abundance' as an emotive-affective description of a large and rising real income per capita."

(In *Principles of Marxism-Leninism* (1959), a corporate work written by forty Soviet scholars, after speaking of Communism as "that society which once for all puts an end to need and poverty and guarantees well-being for all its citizens," and which "takes as its goal the full satisfaction of men in respect to all these goods and service," goes on to admit that "Of course, Communist society cannot take upon itself the satisfaction of extravagant wishes and whims. Its goal, as Engels stressed is the satisfaction of the reasonable needs of men . . .")

## Cybernation

And now we come to cybernation. What does the word mean? What is it likely to bring us? and when? There is a story told about the Monroe Doctrine which illustrates what I first want to say about "cybernation." It seems that there were two patriotic Americans who met on the street one day.

"What's this I hear about you?" demanded one, "That you say you do not believe in the Monroe Doctrine?"

The reply was instant and indignant: "It's a lie. I never said I didn't believe in the Monroe Doctrine. I do believe in it. It's the palladium of our liberties. I would die for the Monroe Doctrine. All I said was that I don't know what it *means*!"

I too am often puzzled about the meaning people attach to "cybernation" or "automation," the more usual word. In many contexts these words are nothing more than symbols standing for progress and change in the twentieth century. People are fascinated by the fantastic performance of automated machines, and perhaps no topic since the evolution of the human body whets the appetites of Sunday-supplement readers more. Now the authors of *The Triple Revolution* are admirably clear about what they mean by "cybernation," defining it as the coupling of computers with automated self-regulating machines. What is somewhat puzzling about what they say is precisely why "cybernation" rather than "automation" is the sign in the sky: why is the marriage of computers with automated machines more important than so-called "Detroit automation" (by which is meant the use of transfer equipment to move work from one automatic machine tool to another and interlocking these tools to get high utilization), or more important than automation resulting from an invention through which, at no greater outlay of capital, the same job can be done with less labor. Whether

one or another particularly advanced form of technology is used would appear to be unimportant in the context in which our Triple Revolutionaries speak. The only advantage I find in the word "cybernation" over the word "automation," other than the fact that "cybernation" is more likely to *displace white collar workers* in some jobs than is "automation," is that "cybernation" has a slightly stronger emotive impact on those who are struck—and who isn't?—by the prestige of science and science-laden technology.

Now for the question, is automation something new? The answer is yes and no. The principles themselves are embodied in many natural processes, both living and non-living. And not only have men recognized the existence of self-regulating mechanisms, they have deliberately constructed them for a hundred years or so.

Nonetheless, though the general notion of automation is not something new, it is certainly true that it is only in the twentieth century that automation has come into its own. As Ernest Nagel, the eminent philosopher of science from Columbia, has written:

When human intelligence is disciplined by the analytical methods of modern science, and fortified by modern material resources and techniques, it can transform almost beyond recognition the most familiar aspects of the physical and social scene. There is surely a profound difference between a primitive recognition that some mechanisms are self-regulating while others are not, and the invention of analytic theory which not only accounts for the gross facts but guides the construction of new types of systems.

Nagel also notes in his article on automation that the introduction of automated machinery was only in part motivated by rising labor costs:

Many articles in current use must be processed under conditions of speed, temperature, pressure and chemical exchange which make human control impossible, or at least impracticable, on an extensive scale. Moreover, modern machines and instruments themselves must often satisfy unprecedentedly high standards of quality, and beyond certain limits the discrimination and control of quantitative differences elude human capacity.

Regardless, however, of how new automation or cybernation is, surely what is important in our context is whether these new forms of technology are likely to cause changes of a different quality or of considerably different magnitude than technological changes in the past. Brunner has written that cybernation "will affect the level of unemployment only in case cybernation involves an accelerated rate of technological innovation. In addition, it would require a *continuous* acceleration in order to raise the average level of unemployment persistently. So far the balance of evidence assembled by investigators of technological innovation yields little support for the assertion that acceleration has been accelerated and definitely no support for the expectation of a continuous acceleration."

But even if there were evidence of a continuous acceleration, one could not expect, even then, the elimination of scarcity: as Paul Diesing reminds us in his recent *Reason in Society*, "When levels of aspiration rise with changes in culture, scarcity increases even tho resource levels may also be rising. Thus an affluent society, one with many resources, might well have a more serious scarcity problem than a poor society, if its goal demands had increased faster than its resources." The meaningful socio-economic test of the putative newness of automation is to be found in the difference it is likely to make in the ratio of substitutability of capital and labor. I find in the discussion of this issue in *The Triple Revolution*, and elsewhere, an implicit confusion of considerable importance: a confusion between technologically efficient production and economically efficient production. Another confusing assumption I find implicitly made is that auto-

mated machines and computers are free goods—much as though these machines were like the hypothetical 50 million robots I mentioned earlier which marched out of the bowels of the earth at no cost to anyone. Let me speak briefly on these points, in order.

A technologically efficient technique is one that maximizes the product given the inputs and the technology used. But there is generally more than one technically efficient way of producing any specified output. The socially important question is: which of the technically efficient processes is the economically efficient method, the one that achieves a given output at minimum cost? Morris Motors of England first used "Detroit automation" in 1927; the method was technically but not economically efficient at that time, because the output might have been produced at lower cost by the simpler, labor-intensive techniques then available. In Alchian and Allen's textbook this problem is given to the student: "A jet plane can fly across the U.S. 3 hours faster than a propeller plane. Which is the more efficient?" The answer given at the back of the book is short and sweet: "Can't tell from that information. Don't know costs."

## Cost of Automation

That brings me to my second point, a point so obvious that I can with equanimity be quite dogmatic: machines, whether automated, married to computers, or what have you, cost money—they are not free. (Remember Milton Friedman's synopsis of the whole of economic theory: There's no such thing as a free lunch!) Ignoring entirely for the moment the impact of new machines on employment, let me quote some estimates of the cost of automating from a recent article by Yale Brozen of the University of Chicago, who speaks with considerable authority in this field:

To automate as completely as possible with present technology, only one major segment of the American economy, manufacturing, would require an expenditure of 2½ trillion dollars (this comes to \$12,000 per man, woman, and child, and the total stock of inanimate goods in the United States has been estimated to be worth only 1/6 more, 3 trillion dollars). Even to modernize manufacturing to the levels of the new plants built in the 1950's would require over 500 billion. Since total spending on new plants and equipment in manufacturing amounts to about 15 billion per year, American manufacturing could not be modernized even to the technology of the level of the 1950's for over 30 years, and this is under the extreme assumption that all the expenditure is used for modernization and none for expansion. With the current division of capital outlays between modernization and expansion, modernization to the level of new plants of the variety built in the 1950's would require about 50 years. To automate completely the manufacturing industry with no increase in total output would require 2 centuries at current rates of modernization. If we expand output at the rate necessary to keep up with population growth, however, present rates of capital formation will never result in complete automation of manufacturing unless the cost of automation is reduced to less than 1/6 of its present expense. This is unlikely to occur within the foreseeable future.

Having given some evidence for believing that automated machines are not free goods in the world we live in, let me, in effect, relax that assumption and, forgetting about the way things really are, proceed on the assumption I sometimes find implicit in *The Triple Revolution*, that machines are free or, what is equivalent, talk about a world in which 50 million (free) robots march into factories and offices and replace workers. Would this be a bad thing? Yes and no. It would be wholly good for those who were working at jobs robots did not take over: robot-produced goods would be considerably cheaper, and an automobile that today costs \$2,000 might tomorrow cost only \$1,000 or less. It would be partly good for those whose jobs robots took over—goods would be cheaper for them too; but partly bad for this class to the extent

that, like any technological change, job reallocation would occur and cause hardship. I think it is perfectly clear, assuming that the introduction of robots does not give us an economy of abundance in which all wants are perfectly satisfied at no cost, assuming that people would still want goods and services not supplied fully by robots, assuming, that is to say, that economic analysis is still viable, that there is no reason to believe that any permanent unemployment would occur, that the problem we would face would be anything other than a monstrous task of job reallocation. In effect, if I were fearful of being automated out of a job, my fear would not be a fear of not finding some job or other, but a fear that the process of reallocation would be costly in terms of paying the price of informing myself about the best and highest-paying and most satisfying alternatives. These costs might be very high, but they are no different in nature from the price I would have to pay if I were fired tomorrow because, say, of a drop in enrollment in my college. If fired, I would certainly not take the first job offered (cutting my neighbor's lawn, taking a paper route, etc.) for I should consider it rational to spend time finding the most productive job I could perform—the job that someone would be willing to pay me most to do (given my taste *qua* teacher for doing as little "work" as possible). It would be costly to remain unemployed; but I should consider the cost worth paying.

## Unemployment and the Unskilled

Perhaps it might be appropriate to say a word about unemployment among the unskilled—which ties in with the third of the revolutions discussed by our Triple Revolutionaries, the one which involves the struggle of Negroes for employment. Again the appropriate question to ask is: are there goods and services that people want and that could be provided by the unskilled? But rather than argue the point, let me simply point to what seems to me to be the relevant experience of West Germany since 1948. In a recent article in the *New Republic*, Edwin L. Dale, Jr., writes as follows:

... the influx into the German labor force during many of the past 15 years was greater proportionately than our present labor force growth. In addition to the refugees, the movement off the farm in Germany was greater than here and all these people have jobs too. Still the demand for labor was not satisfied. And so now half-literate Turks are being transported to Germany and put to work. They are about as unskilled as it is possible to be, and they cannot even speak the language. Yet they all have jobs. This is to say nothing of Italians, Greeks, and Spaniards. And to cap this story, the rate of 'automation' in Germany has been consistently faster than ours, as measured by the annual rise in the output of each worker per hour or day or week. Today, despite all these things, there is a severe labor shortage in Germany, with 6 vacancies for each unemployed worker.

Dale also says that there is "some evidence that the rate of unemployment among the unskilled is *lower*, in relation to the total unemployment rate, than it was ten years ago."

We can, however, expect employment among the unskilled to *diminish* in the United States, and this for two main reasons: first the rise in the minimum wage rate. It is increasingly clear that the minimum wage rate, which has been raised much faster than average hourly earnings (in 1950 it was 29 per cent of average earnings in manufacture, in 1963 it was 47 per cent), has greatly contributed to what Arthur Burns has called the "overpricing of unskilled labor relatively to skilled labor." In a recent issue of *Daedalus* devoted to the Negro, James Tobin wrote: "People who lack the capacity to earn a decent living need to be helped, but they will not be

helped by minimum wage laws, trade union wage pressures or other devices which seek to compel employers to pay them more than their work is worth. The more likely outcome of such regulations is that the intended beneficiaries are not employed at all." And even Robert Theobald wrote, in a recent article in *The Nation*, "Despite the obvious social desirability of better minimum wage provisions, the evidence becomes ever clearer that increases in the minimum wage decrease the attractiveness of marginal employees."

Another reason why employment of the unskilled will continue to be a problem is the effect of unions in raising wages above the market rate. Consider the classical example of the elevator boys in Chicago. A few years ago elevator boys in downtown Chicago were earning \$1-\$1.25 per hour. Then they were organized, and their wages rose to \$2.40 per hour. But automatic elevators could be bought and maintained at a cost of approximately \$7,000 per year. Now at the old rate of pay, two shifts of elevator boys cost about \$5,000 per year; at the new rate, it was cheaper to introduce automatic elevators, and the elevator boys were unemployed. But notice: there was a time lag between the introduction of the new, higher rate of pay and the introduction of the new elevators—for 6, 9, 12 months the boys were making highly satisfactory wages. Then the new elevators were introduced. And to what did the boys (and the union) attribute their lost jobs? To automation. Not to the rise in wages above market level.

### Pay-For-Play

Now we come, finally, to the feature of *The Triple Revolution* which has aroused more criticism and scorn, and sometimes amusement, than any other—the "pay-for-play" proposal, the proposal urged that "society, through its appropriate legal and governmental institutions, undertake an unqualified commitment to provide every individual and family with an adequate income as a matter of right." It was this feature that aroused the most editorial comment: "Just Roll Around Heaven All Day" was the title of the New York *Herald Tribune's* editorial; "The More Abundant Hell," said the *Chicago Tribune*; "Program For A Frightening Future," proclaimed the *Wall Street Journal*. Other editorials were headed: "Shiftlessness in High Gear," "Funny Money People," "All Pay And No Work." Mr. Ferry wrote recently: "Many if not most readers got the impression that we were in effect advocating the indolent society, a cushioned technological epiphany in which cashing government income checks, beer drinking, television watching, and general lollygagging would be the main activities of the majority of the people." I am reminded of a brief Boswell-Sam Johnson dialogue: Boswell says, "So Sir, you laugh at schemes of political improvement?" Johnson: "Why, Sir, most schemes of political improvement are very laughable things." My own position on this "guaranteed income" proposal is not that it is laughable, but that it is unnecessary, for reasons I have suggested.

Nonetheless, I find some merit in the proposal, not to cure the plague of increasing permanent unemployment caused by automation—there is no such plague—but as a way of helping those who are both poor and unemployable, a way preferable to the hodge-podge of welfare measures now in existence. The authors of *The Triple Revolution* are aware of this feature when they write

that: "The unqualified right to an income would take the place of the patchwork of welfare measures—from unemployment insurance to relief—designed to ensure that no citizen or resident of the United States actually starves."

Ferry, in some of his very recent articles, notes that the authors of *The Triple Revolution* might have cited Professor Milton Friedman in support of the minimum income scheme. And well they might. Friedman has proposed what he calls a "negative income tax", which calls for paying a man a percentage of the difference between what he earns and some given premium. If the minimum is \$3,000 and the rate is 50%, then if a man earns \$2,000 he will be given \$500; and if he earns nothing he will be given \$1,500. (Note that many who say they approve of Friedman's scheme are speaking of something different, of paying a man the difference between the minimum set and what he earns at 100% rate.) In support of this scheme, Friedman argues first that help would be given in the most useful form, cash; second, that this scheme makes explicit the cost borne by society; third, that it operates outside the market, and so does not, as do most present welfare measures, distort the market or impede its functioning; and finally, that this program would help the poor precisely because and to the extent that they are poor, not because they are farmers and some farmers are poor (at present, 80% of farm aid goes to farmers with incomes above \$10,000), or because they are too old to work and some who are too old to work are poor. Friedman notes in a recent article that in 1963, \$45 billion was spent on direct welfare payments and programs: old-age assistance, social security payments, farm price-support programs, public housing, and so on. (This figure does not include payments to veterans or the indirect cost of minimum wage laws, tariffs, and the like.) But if this \$45 billion had been used to give cash payments to the poor, each consumer unit among the poorest 10 per cent of our population could have been given \$7,800; or the poorest 20 per cent could have been given \$4,000; or \$2,250 could have been given to that one-third of the nation which is ill-fed, ill-clothed and ill-housed. (Observe also that today only one-eighth of the population has an income as low as that received in the middle Thirties by Roosevelt's one-third.)

Perhaps I can best bring to a close, and implicitly summarize, what I have said, with a quotation from Baines' *History of the Cotton Manufacture in Great Britain*, published in 1835.

*At the accession of George III (1760), the manufacture of cotton supported hardly more than 40,000 persons; but since, machines have been invented by means of which one worker can produce as much yarn as 200 or 300 persons could at that time . . . And yet there are still many, even scholars and members of Parliament, who are so ignorant or so blinded by prejudice as to raise a pathetic lament over the increase and spread of the manufacturing system . . .*

*These people appear to cherish the absurd opinion that if there were no machines, manufacture would really give employment to as many millions as now; nor do they reflect that the whole of Europe would be inadequate for all this work; and that in that case a fifth of the whole population would need to be occupied with cotton-spinning alone!*

"That is what the Triple Revolution is about, after all: the pattern of work, war, and love among the collectivities of mankind . . . Where they singled out technological change as the key radical circumstance of our age, and argued from that to the social change which should follow in its wake, I would plead for an important shift of emphasis. It is the human insistence on social change, and human dedication to achieving it, which makes a revolution.

Human rights is prior to the questions of weaponry and cybernation. Cybernation and weaponry need no manifesto. The revolution in human rights does."



Anthony J. Morley

## PROLOGUE TO A MANIFESTO -- FOR A REVOLUTION WITHOUT ONE

By ANTHONY J. MORLEY

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Nothing was so revolutionary in the celebrated *Triple Revolution Report* as its call for radical change in the ways men shape their community. The subject of that Report, now over three years old, was cybernation, weaponry, and human rights. A distinguished ad hoc consortium contended that in each of these areas America confronts a "new era" of operation and aspiration. They pointed out the "mutually reinforcing" character of the three revolutions, and they began their statement by recognizing that what the Triple Revolution "demands" is "a fundamental re-examination of existing values and institutions."

But that demand the Ad Hoc Committee themselves scarcely attempted to meet. They dropped a few tantalizing hints and spun off a list of program proposals, but they didn't really tell us how we must be prepared to change the ways we think and feel. Yet just such exhortation, just such an attack on what is in favor of what ought to be, is what gives revolutions their indispensable *elan*. Without the doctrine and the manifesto, we are left not with a call to revolution in which we can take part, but only a description of revolution which is going to happen to us. It is roughly the difference between an "Industrial Revolution" and an "American Revolution." The one just happened, and it changed everyone's life, willy nilly. The other we made to happen and it also changed everyone's life, because that was what we intended. What I want to plead for is a human shaping of the Triple Revolution so it becomes more like the latter than the former. In other words, I revolt myself

at any assumption that the challenge before us is simply to adjust, no matter how creatively, to revolutionary forces that come upon us, as it were, from outside our own reflection. I want to insist that if there is a Triple Revolution (or a Double or a Quadruple), its true importance lies in the use we make of it (or fail to make of it) as the circumstance and servant of a deeper revolution yet. That is the revolution which still awaits its manifesto—a revolution, a turn-about of attitudes and action in work, war, and love.

That's what the Triple Revolution is about, after all: the patterns of work, war, and love among the collectivities of mankind. No one questions the elemental or virtually instinctual character of these activities among us and our ancestors. What one does question is the patterns we clothe them in. If they are being revolutionized we had better all be concerned. And if we are concerned, perhaps we can take a hand in what direction the revolutions move.

It was the revolution in work more than either of the others, which most exercised the Ad Hoc Committee three years ago. For fully two-thirds of their Report, and with a sheaf of statistics, they showed how cybernation must topple our production-distribution orthodoxies. They pointed to the spreading poverty pool, to the starvation of public sectors, to the striking slow-down of new-job creation in factory industry, to the mind-boggling increase in productive potential—and had no trouble arguing that the income-through-jobs link must simply be discarded.



In the familiar formulation, which owes much to Galbraith (he was not among the signers), they insisted that economic mechanisms must now be founded on "the facts of abundance," not on earlier ages' "ideas of scarcity." And so they urged as absolutely essential a social policy of "unqualified commitment to provide every individual and every family with an adequate income as a matter of right."

So far so good. This demand for the guaranteed annual income (not wage) bears at least the seeds of person-involving revolution (as distinct from an impersonal "cybernation revolution"). It inevitably necessitates an assemblage of political power to see that those who oppose such foolishness are displaced by those who favor it. It requires politics, in short in order that it may achieve policy. That is rightly the way of revolutions, and there has in fact been a reasonable progression from the "Ad Hoc Committee on Triple Revolution" (1964) to an "Ad Hoc Committee for Guaranteed Income" (1966), with doubtless a considerable interlocking directorate.

I will come back later to the revolutionary implicates of cybernation, but while we are still with the 1964 Ad Hoc Committee, let's glance at what else they had to say. Glancing is about all that is possible, because glancing is about all they themselves took time for.

The second strand in the Triple Revolution is the Weaponry Revolution. What with technical artifacts to obliterate matter (the Bomb) or condition minds (the drugs) and matched delivery systems for both (rockets, laser-satellites, plain ordinary food), we must indeed face up to "the final futility of war." What this seems to have meant to the Ad Hoc Committee three years ago (before the Johnson-Goldwater election victory) was that governments would act on their understanding that war had been "eliminated" as an instrument of international problem solving, and that war expenditures would drop. They saw their evidence in the (then) policy of closing down certain military facilities and in Congressional pressure for economizing even in the space race. The anticipated result, of course, was weakening of a major employment prop in the national economy, and still further aggravation of the ominous syndrome already signaled by the impact of automation. That syndrome was a rising abundance of consumer goods accompanied by falling levels of production employment. What if only four or five per cent of gross national product went for "defense," instead of eight or ten? Wouldn't another several million persons, at least, be cut off from their wages, and thereby rendered impotent as consumers, in a social order which depends on consumption? And wouldn't the necessity of enabling consumption by guaranteed income thus become more compelling than ever?

Perhaps it would. But American policy since 1964, far from abandoning war, has somehow seemed to embrace it more ardently than ever. Unemployment rates have dropped, not risen. Economists worry now about how to reduce overall consumer demand, not about how to stimulate it. What do these things say about the Triple Revolution?

What they say is probably really quite simple, namely, that even so revolutionary a change as our century's quantum-jump enhancement of the means of mass destruction, does not revolutionize our attitudes or our actions in making war any more than in making work. "Final futility" or no, here we still are, not only making war, but also knowing as we do it that making war makes

work. It is convenient and ghastly all at the same time.

Part three of the Triple Revolution was, or is, the Human Rights Revolution. It consists in the "universal demand" for a social order in which every individual is honored for his inherent dignity, without regard for the extraneous factor of race. As with weaponry, the Ad Hoc Committee's treatment of this revolution was almost exclusively in terms of its inter-relationship with cybernation and the work-income nexus, and that in the American context. Thus, the promise of jobs for Negroes is a "cruel and dangerous hoax," because it is Negroes more than any other group (thanks to low levels of training and education) who are "being exiled from the economy by cybernation." The caveat is clear that those who enlist in the human rights revolution had better take note of the other revolutions with which it is so fatefully linked.

It is precisely this linkage of the revolutions which demands (and should inspire) our most revolutionary thought. The lines of dominant influence, however, should be just the reverse of those which the Ad Hoc Committee implied. Where they singled out technological change as the key radical circumstance of our age, and argued from that to the social change which should follow in its wake, I would plead for an important shift of emphasis. It is the human insistence on social change, and human dedication to achieve it, which makes a revolution. There is a vast difference between the cybernation and weaponry revolutions, on the one hand, and the human rights revolution on the other. The difference lies in the simple fact that men can commit their whole being to the advancement of human rights in a way that they cannot commit their whole being to the advancement of cybernation or weaponry. This is not to say that cybernation and weaponry do not raise crucial questions in the field of human rights. Indeed they do, and it was an important service of the Ad Hoc Committee to make that point. But even more important is the point they did not make, that it is the revolution in human rights to raise crucial questions about cybernation and weaponry.

To put it in a somewhat formal and stilted way, the question of human rights is prior to the questions of weaponry and cybernation. That may seem a bland and obvious assertion, but especially in America it is imperative to shout it from the rooftops. Our fascination by gadgetry is such that the new feats of computers and the new promise of genuine Buck Rogers warfare will always get at least (or at most) a superficial hearing. The *Triple Revolution Report* itself touched off a spate of gee-whiz journalism (some of it pretty portentous) focused on the wondrous notion of no one's working but everyone's getting paid. The authors were reportedly amazed at the publicity. But why should they have been? Hadn't they themselves made cybernation the feature event?

Insofar as I have any quarrel with the Ad Hoc Committee (and it is strictly a quarrel among friends), it is with their order of priorities in talking about revolutions. Without any doubt we live now and in decades to come with the consequences of revolutionary change in the ways of work and the ways of war. That there already are such consequences, and will be more of them, is plainly inevitable—just as *some* sort of pervasive consequence of the Industrial Revolution was inevitable. But whether the consequences of these accelerated tech-

nologies are for the good of men's community or for its destructive distortion (perhaps, more simply, its destruction), is not a question with any inevitable answer at all. The answer here will be a function of what happens in the vastly different revolution in human rights.

Human rights is not a technological affair. A human rights revolution begins with decisions of the head and heart, in order to guide the actions of the hand. Decisions of the head and heart, if they are to be more than knee-jerk reactions to the hammerings of outside events, require the passionate thinking through of what it is that counts for quality in the human condition. We will not get that sort of quality by oh-ing and ah-ing, much less by wringing our hands, before the doubled-edged wonders of technology unleashed.

The human rights revolution is incomparably the most important of the three which make up our triple strand. It belongs in a class by itself, because it alone is uncertain of success, because it alone enlists the loyalties of whole men (head, heart, and hands) because it alone divides the human from the inhuman, because it alone insists on the issues of value, purpose, and community. It alone, in short, has the revolutionary potential to counter the mesmerising effect of cybernation and weaponry with a vast enthusiasm for making men deeply free.

That is what we most desperately need—a vast enthusiasm for the community of free persons. Cybernation offers promise that men may be physically released to work at achieving such community. It also raises the threat that without an external reward for toil, we may be unable to discover the internal worth of living. Something like that seems to be the effect of putting more and more people simply on "welfare." Modern weaponry offers promise (not a very promising promise) that men may be physically scared into giving up war. It also raises the threat that some "little war" will end with the Big Bang before we manage to get it finished. Something like that seems horrendously possible in Viet Nam today. Quite obviously, however, neither cybernation nor weaponry will of themselves decide whether we capitalize on their promises or succumb to their threats. All those two revolutions can do (and they do it very well) is set an urgent stage for fomenting, planning, and executing the third—the people's revolution in human rights, which will proclaim the values and voice the aspirations of the world community of the deeply free. This must be a real revolution, because this must enlist followers, create leaders, develop strategy, and achieve political power in a world where rights are eroded.

Cybernation and weaponry need no manifesto. The revolution in human rights does. Cybernation and weaponry are already here. The revolution in human rights may still quite likely fail or be diverted. Unless it succeeds—unless it makes technology a component of human rights, rather than human rights a derivative of technology—then what's left of the Triple Revolution will turn out not to enhance our freedom, but only to seal our fate.

Two-thirds of the Triple Revolution is essentially over. The other third is scarcely begun. In the community of men we have learned well the ways of war, we have brilliantly mastered the ways of work; but we are bumbling dolts in the ways of love. Work, war, love: the greatest of these is love. A Triple Revolution. The task for the world's Ad Hoc Committee is now to draft the compelling manifesto for that third of the Revolution which counts the most.

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"The triple revolution holds great promise for a more humane society, but it has also created a situation of extremely high risk. We have to overcome the high degree of dehumanization that already characterizes our society and move toward creative and humane responses to the revolutionary forces in the world—if we are to prevent the even more drastic dehumanization that may otherwise be in store for us. Social science can make important contributions to this humanizing process, yet it may also contribute to—rather than counteract—the forces toward dehumanization. There is a danger that the social research may be applied to the creation of a social order built on the systematic manipulation of human behavior. Part of our response to this danger is a deliberate commitment to the humanization of society."



Herbert C. Kelman

## SOCIAL RESEARCH AND THE TRIPLE REVOLUTION

By HERBERT C. KELMAN

Herbert C. Kelman is professor of psychology and research psychologist at the Center for Research on Conflict Resolution, University of Michigan. Formerly he held research positions and fellowships at Yale University (1947-1951), John Hopkins University (1951-1954), National Institute of Mental Health (1955-1957), and Oslo Institute for Social Research (1960-1961). He has received the Socio-Psychological Award of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (1956); and was elected a Fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences (1954-55; 1967); and a Visiting Fellow at the Western Behavioral Sciences Institute (1964). He is the editor and co-author of *International Behavior: A Social-Psychological Analysis*, and author of *A Time to Speak: On Human Values and Social Research*, and has written numerous professional articles. Recently, he chaired the International Conference on Social Psychological Research in Developing Countries and he is a past president of the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues. He was born in Vienna, Austria, in 1927.

In recent years, social scientists and social critics have increasingly expressed concern about the possibility that the techniques and findings of social research might be misused, or that they might be applied in the support of policies that are inconsistent with fundamental human needs. Such a concern readily leads to more basic questions about the place that social science occupies within our social structure—about its relationship to those forces in our society that tend toward dehumanization. As a working social scientist, I share the conviction that social research, in its efforts to study man and society systematically and understand them rationally, represents an inherently liberating force. But I am also struck by the possibility that certain dehumanizing tendencies may be equally inherent in the methods and orientations of social science. I worry lest these tendencies become the ones to dominate the uses of social science in policy contexts, and lest the primary role of the social scientist in society become that of an agent for dehumanization. I do not propose this as a likely outcome because—unlike many humanists who voice similar concerns—I am fully cognizant of the constructive and liberating implications of social research. But it is a danger that we must recognize; if we fail to do so, and if we fail to confront it actively, it may turn into a reality.

### Dehumanizing Forces and Role of the Social Scientist in Society

Before discussing the role of the social scientist in relation to dehumanizing forces, let me comment on the

nature of these dehumanizing forces as I see them.

I do not take the position that everything in our world is going badly and that we are on a steady downward drift as compared to some golden age of the past. There is no question that our generation has experienced horrors and faces dangers that are as extreme as any known to man. There is no question that the mass society that we have spawned threatens our very humanity. But there are also many hopeful signs on the horizon. The "triple revolution" that is taking place today holds the promise of a world more suitable for human occupancy. The "cybernation revolution," by extending productive capacity to an almost unlimited degree, makes possible the total elimination of poverty. The "weaponry revolution," by introducing weapons that "can obliterate civilization" (p. 3), makes possible the elimination of war as an instrument for resolving international conflicts. The "human rights revolution," both within the United States and all over the world, promises "the establishment of social and political regimes in which every individual will feel valued and none will feel rejected on account of his race" (p. 3). (All page references refer to quotations from the Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Triple Revolution, reprinted as a public service by Teamsters Joint Council No. 13, St. Louis, Mo.)

There are many indications that some of our political leaders are aware of the significance of these revolutions, although they are often unable to draw the full implications from them and to reorganize their thinking accordingly. Serious efforts to combat the problem of poverty are being made, even though they fail to go to the roots.

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The necessity of avoiding nuclear war and creating some sort of international security community seems to be recognized, even though much of our foreign policy fails to reflect this recognition. There has been genuine progress in the establishment of human rights, even though we have not accepted the idea that the human rights revolution calls for a basic restructuring of our national and international systems.

The cautious optimism that I am expressing here does not diminish my feeling that the current *threats* to human values are of serious proportions. This feeling is based on two considerations.

(1) While it is true that the triple revolution holds great promise for a more humane society, it has also created a situation of extremely high risk. If we face up to the implications of these revolutions, we may come closer to a society built on peace, human welfare, and social justice. Failure to grasp the implications of these revolutions, however, and to re-examine our values and institutions in the face of the new conditions they are creating, is likely to lead to disaster. Failure to adapt to the weaponry revolution may lead to nuclear war and to the brutalization that is bound to come in its wake. Failure to adapt to the cybernation revolution may lead to the establishment of a permanent class of the poor, living restlessly within our affluent society but excluded from it and deprived of the opportunity to gain entry into it. Secretary of Labor Wirtz has spoken, in this connection, of "the development of a separate nation of the poor, the unskilled, the jobless, living within another nation of the well-off, the trained and the employed" (p. 9). Failure to adapt to the human rights revolution may lead to a world dangerously divided along racial lines, with our nation as the chief protagonist of the rich and arrogant white world. So, while the triple revolution holds great promise, it also confronts us with enormously threatening possibilities.

(2) While there are indications that some of our political leaders are aware of the significance of these revolutions, we cannot be at all certain that they will have the insight and courage to take the radical steps that are necessary, or that they will be allowed to do so. The emergence of a vociferous right-wing movement and its capture of the Republican Party in 1964 (despite Goldwater's decisive defeat) suggest that the political forces arrayed against a constructive and realistic response to the triple revolution are likely to be quite powerful. The Johnson policy in Vietnam and in Latin America suggests that, even where there is awareness of changing conditions, it is likely to be uneven and to be pre-empted, at critical moments, by irrelevant and antiquated approaches.

Whether these revolutions will fulfill their promise or lead to disaster depends, to a considerable extent, on the response of the American people and particularly of the opinion-making elites. It depends on their readiness to give active support to innovative policies conducive to the abolition of poverty, the elimination of war, and the universal extension of human rights, and to resist policies destructive of these ends, be they the products of limited vision or of a desire to perpetuate special privilege. A public likely to respond in this way must have acquired the habits of caring enough to embrace policies for the simple reason that they extend human welfare, of participating actively in the debate of basic issues, and of resisting the manipulations of those who count on old

Volume V, Number 37

fears, hatreds, and patterns of thought in their own quest for power.

The prospects for this kind of public response in our mass society are not very reassuring. In the massive urban and bureaucratic centers, the feeling of alienation and the loss of the sense of community are often so widespread that active commitment to the welfare of others cannot readily be generated. In the small towns and rural areas, the sense of isolation from the centers of power is often so desperate that it leads to a desire to return to a simpler life, at the expense of those who have been neglected by society. Everywhere, the vastness and complexity of the system is such that individuals feel unable to give it direction or even to control their own destinies within it. They are willing to go along with the demands made upon them, even at the expense of their own values.

Elements ready to take advantage of the public's vulnerability to manipulation are ever-present. The centralized nature of modern society and the availability of powerful mass media create opportunities for large-scale manipulation of the behavior of masses. Such manipulation is often carried out in systematic fashion by specialized agencies expressly set up for this purpose. In its extreme form, it consists in the effort by the state to achieve total control over the environment of entire populations, characteristic of totalitarian systems. The Nazi regime in Germany and the public reactions in the face of it are not just accidents that happened, but very much products of the modern world—the meaning and implications of which we have yet to fathom. In less extreme form, large-scale manipulation consists in the systematic control of information necessary for public opinion-making and the consequent engineering of consent.

Only to the extent that we can overcome this degree of dehumanization that already characterizes our society, and move toward creative and humane responses to the revolutionary forces in the world, will we be able to prevent the more drastic dehumanization that may otherwise be in store for us.

This brings me back to the question of the role of social science in relation to the forces toward dehumanization in our society. The reason for my deep concern is that the products, procedures, and orientations of social research inherently reflect these forces in the sense that they treat man as an object rather than as an active, choosing, responsible agent. There is thus a danger that the widespread use of social science approaches—of psychological tests, interviews, experiments, and observations—may in itself contribute to people's sense of alienation and helplessness, to the feeling that their destinies are entirely controlled by external forces; and that, furthermore, these approaches may lend themselves most readily to the purposes of those agencies who are concerned with manipulating and controlling the behavior of individuals—with or without the consultation or the active involvement of the social scientist himself. To the extent that this danger becomes a reality, the social scientist becomes an agent and mediator of dehumanizing forces. It is even conceivable that a caricatured and perverted version of social science principles and techniques may serve as the operational code for an efficient dehumanized society.

Let me expand somewhat on my statement that, by treating man as an object, the products, procedures, and orientations of social research inherently reflect dehuman-

Page Fifteen



izing forces. A great deal of social research is designed to provide information on the social conditions under which one or another type of behavior is likely to be manifested, or—to put it in other terms—on the variables that control various kinds of responses. The knowledge produced by this kind of research—assuming that the findings are relatively stable and valid—can readily be translated into attempts to manipulate human behavior. By creating the necessary social conditions, one ought to be able to produce any desired response. I am not proposing that all such uses of social science knowledge are necessarily objectionable. While I regard any manipulation of the behavior of others as an ethically ambiguous act, I also feel that such manipulation is often socially useful and even necessary. Certainly I would not argue that this kind of knowledge is in itself dangerous. But there is the danger that it will be used for purposes of systematic and large-scale manipulation inconsistent with the welfare of the person being manipulated and with his rights as a fully choosing individual.

As for the procedures of social science research, they typically involve at least some degree of invasion of privacy, and frequently also some form of deception. Though I am troubled by these features of our research procedures, I am also aware of the fact that they are often essential to the execution of a piece of research. If we regard this research as significant, we are thus confronted with a genuine conflict of values. For the present purposes, however, the main point about the use of deception and the invasion of privacy is that they mimic procedures used extensively in totalitarian settings and frequently by public agencies in any mass society. Thus, in his very procedures, the social scientist may contribute to the denial of personal dignity and the deprivation of decent human relationships that the individual may experience elsewhere in his life.

Finally, in its orientation to man, social research deprives him of his wholeness and his unique individuality. We are interested in him as part of a group, to whose average score he contributes. We try to wash out the random error generated by his idiosyncrasies. We categorize him, classify him, and typologize him. We isolate dimensions and parts of him that we investigate outside of the context of his total personality. I do not deplore this, because the task of the social scientist—unlike that of the novelist—is not to capture the richness of an individual's existence, but to develop general propositions, and his orientation to man is completely consistent with that task. Nevertheless, by taking this orientation—for perfectly valid intellectual reasons—are we not contributing to those forces in our society that tend to transform man into a depersonalized object?

The treatment of man as an object is actually inherent in the very foundation of the scientific study of behavior. What the social scientist tries to do is to gain some distance from man and from society, to place them outside of himself—in short, to objectify them—so that he can analyze them systematically. I consider this approach highly valuable as a means of gaining understanding and rational control of social forces. The treatment of man as an object is socially useful as long as it remains an analytic means. It becomes dangerous when it is turned into a social end, when it defines the image of man around which society is organized. (I might point out, in passing, that those right-wing critics of social research who complain about invasion of privacy and manipulation

of the mind take precisely the opposite position. They are concerned about the treatment of man as an object when it is used as an analytic means, but are more than willing to endorse it as a social end—as they do in their readiness to deprive fellow human beings of their freedom because they hold deviant views, or of their dignity because they are black or poor.)

The reason for my concern about the consequences of social research is that it is often so difficult to draw the line between means and ends. In a society suffused with pressures toward dehumanization, there is always the danger that the products, procedures, and orientations of social research will be applied—by others, if not by ourselves—to the creation of a social order in which man is treated as an object, deprived of his individuality, and manipulated for purposes outside of himself. Unless we concern ourselves with this danger, we may be contributing to the very forces that we hope to arrest, and we may be taking upon ourselves an active role in the dehumanization of society.

How can we respond to these dangers? We can keep ourselves constantly aware of them. We can try to communicate them to our students, to the agencies who use the knowledge we produce, and to the public at large. Increased active awareness of the problem is in itself an important part of the solution. We can maintain our vigilance toward clear abuses of social science approaches, both within the profession and outside of it. We can make deliberate attempts to build protections against manipulation or resistances to it into the processes we use or study. We can explore new methods of investigation that permit a greater degree of true participation of our respondents in the research process. These are all meaningful answers to which I subscribe wholeheartedly. But it seems to me that we must go beyond them. I have argued that there is a danger that we may be taking an active role in the dehumanization of society. At least part of our response to this danger must be a deliberate commitment to an opposite role—to an active role in the humanization of society.

### **Role of the Social Scientist in The Humanization of Society; The Need for Radical Thinking**

What I am proposing is that we—and I mean we as a discipline—ought to devote at least part of our energies to carving out a role for the social scientist in the effort to define a social order that is more consonant with human needs. This, in turn, implies that the social scientist must contribute to radical thinking about societal processes. The kind of radical thinking I have in mind is captured very nicely in the title of Dwight Macdonald's essay, *The root is man* (1946). While this essay is a fundamental critique of Marxism, its title is derived from a quotation by Karl Marx: "To be radical is to grasp the matter by its roots. Now the root for mankind is man himself."

There are two components to the radical thinking that I am advocating. The first is that, in analyzing societal processes, it searches for causes and attempts to specify the conditions that define a given state of affairs. Thus, it views any particular social arrangement or policy as one of many possible ones, and helps us escape the trap of thinking that what is must therefore be. It throws into question the assumptions on which current arrange-

ments and policies are based, and tests out alternative assumptions. By specifying the conditions that have made the present situation necessary, it readily guides us to thinking about those conditions that would make alternative situations possible. In short both in the analysis of the present state of affairs and in the search for alternatives, it goes to the roots.

But the root is man—and this is the second component of the radical thinking that I am advocating. It tries to get away from abstractions—from thinking about institutions as if they had a life of their own, apart from the men who have created them and who are served by them. In analyzing social arrangements and policies, it asks what they mean to concrete human beings.

I hope it is clear that what I mean by radical thinking is not the advocacy of extreme actions or of social upheavals. It is, rather, the willingness to view any societal arrangement, not as necessary or inevitable, but as one of many alternative possibilities, man-made and dedicated to the purposes of men, and therefore open to change if it no longer fulfills these purposes adequately. What is sometimes called radicalism—whether of the left or right variety—is really a perversion of the kind of radical thinking that I am speaking of, for it merely substitutes one set of dogmas and clichés for another. The reorganization of society that it calls for is not based on an analysis that goes to the roots and on an open examination of a wide range of alternatives in terms of their human dimensions, but on a total acceptance of a series of preconceived solutions derived from an all-encompassing ideological system.

The radical thinking that I am proposing is not a distraction from the task of the social scientist, but one way of carrying it out. It is directly continuous with the approach of the social scientist, and particularly with that of the social psychologist. It is continuous methodologically, the social psychologist.

### **Application for the Triple Revolution**

Let me illustrate what I have in mind by coming back to the triple revolution. What are some of the ways in which a social scientist, who is willing to go to the roots, can contribute to the development of appropriate responses to the revolution in weapons systems, the revolution in our system of production, and the revolution in human rights that characterize our present situation?

(1) To think radically in response to the dangers posed—as well as the promise held—by the weaponry revolution, means to start with the proposition that there are alternative ways of organizing the international system, alternative goals that a nation can pursue within that system, and alternative means that can be employed in the pursuit of these goals. Social science analysis can address itself to delineation of these alternatives and identification of the conditions presupposed by each.

Thus, there is no reason to assume that the sovereign nation state represents the only principle by which the international system can be organized. A comparative perspective would soon make it apparent that the nation state was not always and is not everywhere the basic political unit—that it represents only one of a range of possible systems. If, therefore, it ceases to be an adequate arrangement for meeting human needs, we have every reason to seek for alternatives. Clearly, given the nature of modern weapons, the nation state can no longer pro-

vide security for its members. Ought we not, therefore, to look for other mechanisms to provide security, along the lines, for example, of a proposal for internationalizing military force that I made a few years ago? This proposal did not call for an abandonment of the national state, but for breaking the link between the nation state and military force—a link that is by no means inevitable. I might add that there are already many indications of fundamental changes within the international system that point toward a gradual deterioration of the sovereign nation state as we have known it. What I am proposing then may seem more radical in relation to the current rhetoric than it does in relation to current realities.

Many of our actions within the international system are predicated on a hierarchy of goals that gives primacy, for example, to the containment of Communism everywhere and at all costs, and to the maintenance of our status as the greatest world power. Our foreign policy is entirely dominated by these goals, often at a great sacrifice in other values—especially in our relations with the developing nations. Our entrapment in the Cold-War framework as the only basis for foreign policy choices has led us, for example, into postures in Vietnam that are antithetical to the needs and desires of the population and carry the risk of ultimate escalation. It is necessary and possible to question the whole set of assumptions that has led us into such predicaments and to extricate ourselves from these assumptions. Solutions may emerge more readily if we re-examine the hierarchy of goals that govern our policy, and entertain the possibility that preserving our great power status and a dominating presence in all parts of the globe may be less important than responding to the human needs of weaker nations.

In the pursuit of national goals we have also assumed that certain means are inevitable. Thus, for example, we are committed to a strategy of deterrence that is based, in part, on questionable psychological assumptions and sometimes on faulty historical analysis. As social scientists, we can question these assumptions; instead of accepting a commitment to an established strategy, we can ask what goal a given strategy is designed to achieve and then search for an alternative most suited to the achievement of that goal. Out of such an analysis, radically different strategies might emerge. A strategy of nonviolence, for example, which seems unthinkable in terms of our current assumptions about the relationships between nations, may turn out to be eminently realistic in the light of the human purposes that we hope to achieve and the human costs that various alternatives entail.

(2) In response to the revolution in our system of production, the *Triple Revolution Report* starts out with the proposition that the traditional assumptions about the distribution of resources—which are based on ideas of scarcity—are inappropriate to a cybernated system, in which "potentially unlimited output can be achieved by systems of machines which will require little cooperation from human beings" (p. 5). If we continue on the assumption that income obtained through contributions to production is "the only major mechanism for distributing effective demand—for granting the right to consume" (p. 6), then we are not only failing to take advantage of the potential for human welfare of a cybernated productive system, but creating a permanent class of the poor in the midst of general abundance. The *sine qua non*, then, for developing alternatives is to break the traditional link between jobs and incomes—to entertain



the possibility of a distribution system in which the legitimate right to economic security is not based entirely on a productive job. The document goes on to urge "that society, through its appropriate legal and governmental institutions, undertake an unqualified commitment to provide every individual and every family with an adequate income as a matter of right" (p. 10). Whatever we may think of this particular recommendation, it demonstrates the possibilities of radical thinking—of a readiness to view any given institutional arrangement as but one of many alternative possibilities.

In our society, a conventionally productive job is not only the basis for economic security, but also the basis for true participation in national life. A more general way, therefore, to approach the problem of poverty is to ask how we can offer meaningful roles to the poor and the jobless within the social system. There are some indications that federal agencies recognize that creating jobs and providing financial assistance are not enough, but that there is also a need to integrate those who have been effectively excluded from the life of our nation into full participation in the system. The emphasis on education, which is the key to participation in the modern world, and on involvement of the poor in decision-making in anti-poverty programs, are signs of this awareness. I might add in passing that the problem of meaningful participation in the system does not only arise among the underprivileged. Thus, for example, I would guess that one of the sources of right-wing protest is the feeling—among individuals who are often highly privileged in terms of income and status—of exclusion from the centers of power in a vast bureaucratic system. Student unrest is no doubt related, at least in part, to a sense of lacking community and participation within a mass institution. The social scientist must thus concern himself with the larger question about the ways in which society fails to meet the needs of various of its members by excluding them from satisfying participation in its central undertakings. The question of the chronically poor, however, is uniquely poignant, because he suffers not simply from insufficient participation in the larger society, but, for all intents and purposes, from total exclusion from it.

One other set of assumptions that is brought into focus by the cybernation revolution relates to the matter of social planning. While private planning in the interest of personal or corporate profit is fully accepted in our society, public planning in the interest of human welfare is regarded with suspicion. Our thinking seems to be bound by too narrow a range of planning models, in all of which planning is synonymous with control by some individuals—whether they be corporation management or a centralized bureaucracy—over the fate of others. We are properly concerned that plans imposed by the few on the many are undemocratic, but we fail to note that planlessness imposed by the few on the many is equally undemocratic. Social scientists can contribute to the development of alternative models of planning that are genuinely democratic—that call for planning *by* individual citizens rather than *for* them. Such models can have ramifications for the acceptability of planning, not only in the economic sphere, but also in urban renewal, conservation of natural resources, and even population control.

(3) An adequate response to the human rights revolution—both in the United States and world-wide—may require us to question the implicit assumption that groups that have been disadvantaged, exploited, and excluded

for generations can now be allowed to enter the system without the system itself undergoing some fundamental changes.

Within the United States, there has been enormous progress in civil rights. I would not want to under-emphasize the amount that has been and is being accomplished. But increased access to public facilities, greater opportunities for jobs, equal protection under the law (at least in the formal sense), and extension of the right to vote—vital though these steps are—may not be enough to bring the entire Negro community, with its history of total exclusion, into full participation in the larger society. The extension of rights and opportunities provides openings for the few and assures that color as such will no longer be a basis for exclusion. It does not change the fact, however, that the masses of American Negroes are caught in a self-perpetuating system that makes it impossible for them to take advantage of the rights and opportunities that have become available—at least not within a future that they can foresee. The resulting hopelessness may help to explain the continued unrest in the face of what, to outside observers, may appear to be steady progress. Perhaps we can gain a better understanding of the nature of the Negro revolution if we recognize that it calls not merely for a removal of barriers so that individual Negroes can advance within the system, but for a restructuring of the system so that the Negro community as a whole can become an integral part of it. Social scientists might devote some thought to the delineation of institutional arrangements that would come closer to meeting this requirement.

Such efforts ought to include an analysis of the helping process, with the aim of finding patterns of assistance that would decrease rather than increase the dependence of the recipient. Help and opportunities that are given to Negroes in a spirit of self-righteous or even guilt-based generosity may improve, to some extent, the welfare of the Negro community, but not its sense of participation, by right, in meaningful roles within the larger society. The amount of assistance given may turn out to be less important than the patterns of participation that an assistance program sets into motion.

When we examine rioting and civil disobedience from the point of view of the restructuring of the system that may be required, it soon becomes clear that the issue is not how to increase respect for law and order, but how to provide a meaningful basis for legitimacy. The laws of a society that does not provide an integral role for an individual and does not meet his basic needs are irrelevant to him, particularly when they are part of a history of legal structures that discriminate against him and enforcement agencies that fail to protect him. The problem then is to find ways of creating legitimacy for the system by assuring individuals a part in it, with all of the reciprocal obligations this entails.

Similar considerations arise in our relations with the developing world. The social revolutions in disadvantaged countries can only be understood if we realize that their populations are no longer willing to be excluded from the international system because of race, color, and history of servitude. They call for a restructuring of the system so that it would provide full participation—not only for the privileged Westernized few, but for the populations at large. An adequate response to these revolutions presupposes the development of models for foreign aid

(continued on page 46)

"Assuming that the TR Report proposes measures which are feasible, what sort of challenge do they make to our values, and what groups of people are likely to translate this challenge into action? There are interesting connections between the Report and Marx's thought in these respects. Both are opposed to a society which operates largely to maximize private profits and exploits people's desires in commercially profitable ways; both favor a society democratically organized to satisfy its people's needs in humanly rewarding ways. Both argue that such a society must be based on a highly productive economic system, but Marx thought that the very structure of a capitalist economy would prevent this highly productive system, whereas the Report assumes that the technology for this system is now present and can be used without a 'socialist' revolution. While I assume that Marx has been proven wrong, I do not see in the Report any adequate substitute for the proletariat in Marxism, the body which is to bring about the desired changes. The most important question therefore, which the Report leave us is: whose responsibility is it to 'break the job-income link' and make the other changes, and what ideology will be constructed to motivate and guide them?"



Jon  
Johanning

## MARX AND THE "TRIPLE REVOLUTION" -- TWO ALTERNATIVES TO THE COMMERCIAL CIVILIZATION

By JON JOHANNING

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In this paper, it is not my intent to criticize the Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Triple Revolution with respect to the economic and political feasibility and desirableness of its specific proposals, or to assess the validity of its economic analysis. Being handicapped by lack of expertise in such mundane matters, we philosophers must assume that any text with which we deal is essentially correct in these fields; if it is not, it is only necessary to wait patiently for a more correct text to appear, and we, at least, have plenty of time for that. What a philosopher can do is draw certain conclusions from the text on the hypothesis that it has the facts straight, and hope that these deductions will be of some use to others. In the present case, it seems most appropriate to focus on the challenge of this Report to the social values to which we in this country are now committed, and to try to estimate the value of this challenge itself.

From this point of view, the Report represents an attempt to develop a new ideology, or, to use C. Wright Mills' term, a "political philosophy," to replace the one that underlies the famous "consensus" of our society. In the first chapter of his book, *The Marxists*,<sup>1</sup> Mills sorts out the various ingredients of political philosophies into four categories, and we can conveniently begin our investigation by asking how the Report's implied political philosophy measures up in each of these categories. As "ideology" (in the special sense which Mills gives to the term), a political philosophy "is itself a social reality . . .

in terms of which certain institutions and practices are justified and others attacked; it provides the phrases in which demands are raised, criticisms made, exhortations delivered, proclamations formulated and, at times, policies determined."<sup>2</sup> Evidently, the Report has relevance to matters under this heading; I shall analyze this aspect of it shortly. Secondly, a political philosophy is an *ethic* or *system of ideals* by reference to which men and events can be judged and "goals and guidelines for aspirations and policies"<sup>3</sup> proclaimed. Here, too, the Report is full of suggestions. The third component, the designation of "agencies of action, of the means of reform, revolution, or conservation, . . . the historical levers by which ideals are to be won or maintained after they have been won,"<sup>4</sup> is largely lacking in the Report, however. At the end of this essay I shall try to show how that lack reopens for us the problem of designating an agency of change, a fundamental problem of politics. Finally, Mills points out that a political philosophy should contain a *theory* about man and society, about history and social change. The Report implies such a theory without going into detail about it, and as I have already said I am assuming for present purposes that that theory is essentially correct.

Therefore, my first task is to analyze the ideological and ideal components of the Report: after this I must indulge in a bit of speculation about the agencies of change which might bring the Report's ideals to realization. If the Report has any appreciable amount of influence in the United States in the years ahead, I







with into really *human* needs, whose satisfaction ennoble the species? From the danger of nuclear annihilation to the fight for decent housing and schools in Northern cities' ghettos, practically all the ills of our society and our world that we are trying to cure by political action can be related to this principle: that instead of moving on uncontrollably toward its own ends, our economic system must be harnessed by political bodies responsible to our wishes, so that we may "let the people decide," as the current phrase has it.

The *Triple Revolution Report* mentions this problem as one of the most urgent facing us. It assumes that government "should be a creative and positive instrument toward [the] ends" of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.<sup>19</sup> It states that planning by public bodies for the general welfare is required by democracy,<sup>20</sup> and recommends more concretely that "planning agencies should constitute the network through which pass the stated needs of the people at every level of society, gradually building into a national inventory of human requirements arrived at by democratic debate of elected representatives."<sup>21</sup> In general, it calls for the conscious creation of institutions to accomplish this,<sup>22</sup> and clearly assumes that this activity will be both a cause and an effect of the "managed change" that will, if we are lucky, see us safely through the completion of the Triple Revolution.

The "ideal," as opposed to the "ideological," element of this value system seems to be fairly generally shared by Marx, the Report's authors, and someone as determinedly non-Marxist as Mr. Bazelon, the corporation lawyer. I shall take it then that this ideal should have a not inconsiderable appeal to broad groups of people, and I expect that this appeal ought to increase in the days ahead, as it is presented, on varying levels of sophistication, to intellectuals, middle-class Americans who are alienated from the system for one reason or another, and the black and white poor. For convenience I shall briefly sum up this ideal: *the determination, by consciously created democratic political institutions, of the needs of society that must be satisfied if all are to live lives of human dignity, and the conscious, planned direction of the system to provide such satisfactions.* It is obvious that rather little progress can be made towards this ideal while the income-job nexus persists, since under this condition there is an inevitable bias towards satisfying the wants of those who happen to have the most purchasing power, by producing what it is most profitable for businesses to invest their funds in producing. On the other hand, once this nexus is eliminated, it should be much easier to realize the ideal, *provided the proper political institutions are created.*

Here, indeed, is the rub, and the point about which the Report has the least to say despite its crucial importance. For what will guarantee that these institutions will have a reasonable chance of being created? And further, just how is the income-job link to be eliminated? For Marx such revolutionary changes were of course no problem. He believed that the agency of historical change was present, in the person of the "proletariat," and that its potency would be increased by the effects on it of the developing capitalist system itself.

Further, he (in the *Critique of the Gotha Program*) and Lenin (in *State and Revolution*<sup>23</sup>) assumed that the transition from capitalism to socialism would put the surplus value taken from the workers by capitalists back

into their hands, although the job-income link (what they called "bourgeois right") would be maintained. Its destruction would have to await the increase of productivity until scarcity was eliminated; then the economic system could afford to take from workers "according to their capacity" and dispense to them "according to their needs." This stage, that of true communism, would presuppose in their view not only a vastly more productive economy than capitalism could ever develop without destroying itself but also the creation of a new type of humanity and new social institutions—the "withering away of the state." In their terms, the *Triple Revolution Report* looks toward a situation that is more advanced than "socialism," since it assumes the abolition of scarcity, but not so advanced as "communism," since the idea of a guaranteed family income is not so radical a change of the present system as the freedom which "communism" would give to everyone simply to claim whatever he needed.

Nevertheless, the Report's ideal would require, to be realized, some sort of political action to perform the function Marx gave to the socialist revolution and the creation of new, communist institutions, to replace the state. That is, the Report's ideal needs to be supplemented by some plan of action, some indication of who will carry out the action, and what political institutions will both channel that action and be developed by it.

To quote Mills again, a political philosophy functions as "an *ideology* in terms of which certain institutions and practices are justified and others attacked; it provides the phrases in which demands are raised, criticisms made, exhortations delivered, proclamations formulated, and, at times, policies determined." What sort of ideology, thus defined, does the Report put forth? How does it attack the existing institutions and justify the ones it proposes? What demand does it raise, what criticisms does it make, what exhortations does it deliver? Here the Report appears strangely schizophrenic: although it states the general necessity for abolishing the job-income link and criticizes the existing institutions for maintaining the link, its own specific proposals and demands do not carry that general ideology forward into specific programs for the "transition period," but instead advocate extending present "pump-priming" programs which are designed to keep the existing system running. David Dellinger has made this criticism in his essay on the Report, "Revolution and Water,"<sup>24</sup> and it seems to have been in the minds of at least two authors of the Report themselves, Theobald and Boggs.<sup>25</sup> Dellinger also remarks that the Report should be addressed not only to "the President and other members of the Establishment" but to Negroes, the unemployed, and all whose jobs are threatened or who are "fed up with meaningless and unnecessary work."

For there is one lesson from the civil rights movement that the committee did not go into. It is that the motive power and dynamic for needed social change come not from the top but rather from those who are victims of the way things are.<sup>26</sup>

He also points to other problems left over by the Report, for example "a whole series of questions concerning the possibility of decentralizing function and control, and safeguarding local and individual freedom."<sup>27</sup>

Obviously, these criticisms concern both the problems of ideology and agency of change that I have raised, and it might appear to some that a rather simple answer to them is possible: organize those whose work is becoming increasingly unnecessary because of cybernation and those who simply have no work, use them to develop the planning institutions of which the Report speaks, and the specific demands and the strategy and tactics of

change will take care of themselves. This does not seem to me an adequate answer. For one thing, I am doubtful that the actual process of destroying jobs will occur that rapidly, and I infer a similar doubt in the minds of the authors from the fact that they put forward proposals *for now* which remain mostly in the framework of the present system.

But as I have already said, such things as the rate of cybernation are matters of controversy with which economists, not philosophers, can deal. Aside from this, I see a further difficulty—the *persistence of the present ideology* will impede all efforts to organize successfully to prepare for the transition. For ideologies do not change as rapidly as reality. It would seem that only after a new reality has become so widespread and obvious that its existence cannot be denied without disastrous results is a new ideology formulated by society to sanction that reality and justify the policies it dictates. This is true of revolutionary movements no less than the status quo: the Bolsheviks began with an ideology derived from Marx as adapted to Russian conditions by Lenin, but the rigors of the post-revolutionary situation demanded the creation of new political institutions, the justification for which was only codified years later in the body of doctrine we call "Stalinism"—something quite unlike what Lenin expected.

The new reality described by the Report has obviously not developed far enough yet to *force* the creation of a new ideology in this manner. Thus someone who would like to organize people along the lines of the Report—provided he can find enough people susceptible to being so organized—has nothing specific to organize them around, no concrete demands to make or criticisms to raise of the Establishment, as long as the new ideology has not been developed. Meanwhile, the present ideology is firmly rooted in the minds of the system's supporters, those who (like us) would criticize the system fundamentally, and those who passively go along with it, alike. Try as we may, we can only repeat the formula, "Break the job-income link!" and then hear from our own minds as well as from others' throats the echo: "Jobs mean life—no income is death!"

This impasse would not be so much of a threat were it not for the immanent dangers of our situation. As Bazelon so well describes, corporate structures now have a power that rivals that of the government, and while the government is at least partially under the control of the electorate, corporations are fundamentally totalitarian organizations, managed from the top down, whose managers have little responsibility to anyone but themselves. This totalitarian "alternative power structure" is now more firmly entrenched than any group or coalition of groups that might be disposed to create the humane, democratic order which the Report calls for, and thus the coming crisis stands a much greater chance of being exploited dictatorially than democratically.

My conclusion is that the *Triple Revolution Report*, on the *ideal* plane, presents an indictment of the shortcomings of our economic system that is fully as trenchant as Marxism, and indeed bears some striking similarities to the thought of the young Marx. Because it implicitly rejects Marxist politics, however, it presents this indictment without stirring up again the old arguments about Stalinist Communism that a generation ago convinced—and still convince—many that there was no humane alternative to American capitalism. Its authors' hearts are

clearly on the side of decentralized decision-making, a voice for all the people in controlling the institutions that have power over their lives, and against dictatorship of any sort. If I were asked whether this Report, insofar as its ideal is concerned, was "socialist" in any sense, I would reply that it is probably as close to socialism as we can get in this country in the latter half of the twentieth century, and at the same time represents the minimum we ought to demand that our economic and political systems do for us. In this sense the abolition of jobs-and-income, should it occur, would be for us an approximate equivalent of what Marx expected from the abolition of private property.

On the other hand, I have also argued that the Report does not provide a workable alternative to the rejected *ideology* and designation of the *agency of social change* of Marxism, and that its own confusion about the programs it recommends is evidence of this shortcoming. I would recommend this area of investigation as one of the most urgent facing us. For unless we can chart a new path toward the goals so temptingly portrayed by the Report, there is no telling what the unprecedented revolutions it refers to will visit upon us once their direction has slipped, perhaps forever, from our hands.

#### NOTES:

<sup>1</sup>New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1962.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup>*The Triple Revolution*, by the "Ad Hoc Committee on the Triple Revolution," Labor in Mid-America Series No. 6, published by Teamsters Joint Council No. 13, St. Louis, Mo., p. 3.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 11.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>12</sup>Herbert Marcuse: *One-Dimensional Man* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964), pp. 35f., quoted from Marx, *Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Oekonomie* (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1953), pp. 592.

<sup>13</sup>Marx of course did not forsee *cybernation* as we know it, but only more advanced *mechanization*; his description of the effects of mechanization, however, is remarkably close to what the Report expects cybernation to achieve.

<sup>14</sup>Karl Marx: *Early Writings*, translated and edited by T. B. Bottomore (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1963), pp. 168f.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 168.

<sup>16</sup>Joan Robinson: *Economic Philosophy* (New York: Doubleday, 1962), p. 134.

<sup>17</sup>New York: Random House, 1963.

<sup>18</sup>*Op. cit.*, p. 135.

<sup>19</sup>*Op. cit.*, p. 13.

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 15.

<sup>23</sup>New York: International Publishers, 1932, pp. 77f.

<sup>24</sup>*Seeds of Liberation*, ed. Paul Goodman (New York: George Braziller, 1964), p. 417.

<sup>25</sup>See the footnote, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

<sup>26</sup>*Op. cit.*, pp. 418f.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 18.



"Poverty, welfare, and unemployment are three separate topics, with little overlap. It is misleading to sum them all up as unemployment. The poor are not unemployed workers. About half the poor are employed at low wages. About half are out of the labor force—aged, widowed, disabled. Loose talk about unemployment is perhaps the major obstacle in the United States to the needed doubling of welfare expenditures. Virtually none of the unemployed are on welfare. Virtually none of those on welfare are unemployed workers."



William A. Martin

# POVERTY IS NOT UNEMPLOYMENT

By WILLIAM A. MARTIN

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The statement called *The Triple Revolution* presented in March 1964, by an ad hoc committee of economists and others, has stirred considerable discussion—chiefly around the issue of "family income as a matter of right in a workless society." Economics is concerned; labor is concerned; liberalism is concerned; but so are welfare, social work, and sociology. Critical discussion of the Triple Revolution statement is bound to find grounds for assent on some points and dissent on others. The major assent expressed here is directed to the idea of family income as a matter of right. The major dissent expressed here is directed to the assumption that the need for this arises out of unemployment—that poverty and unemployment are the same thing or are closely related.

Any criticism of an exaggerated statement about unemployment runs the risk of being dismissed as "conservative"—or business-minded or anti-labor. It may be nothing more than anti-economistic, or merely pro-factual and anti-assumptionistic. But the type of reader who is habituated to discounting the objectivity of social science and who wants to know, before he is willing to listen to any analysis, what the writer is *for*, where he *stands*, who he *is*—this type of reader is here obligingly told at the outset that the writer regards unemployment as bad; thinks that any amount of it is too much; but believes that unemployment is not the only evil; and can prove that it is an exaggerated problem, that poverty is worse than unemployment, and that most poverty is wholly unrelated to unemployment.

The three parts of *The Triple Revolution* hang together around a series of unsupported statements about

unemployment. It is asserted that unemployment is a huge problem; that the official statistics understate it; that it is due mainly to "cybernation" or "automation;" that most poverty is a result of unemployment; that unless unemployment is eliminated there is no hope for civil rights; that there ought to be ways other than military to keep down unemployment; and that it can't be kept down anyway, so we need a new system in which family income is guaranteed even when the family has no steady relationship to jobs and wages. The reply offered here may be summarized as follows: The Triple Revolution is an amateurish attempt by economists (and those who trust their assumptions unquestioningly) to deal with topics that lie outside their field of competence; and this kind of loose talk about unemployment is perhaps the major obstacle in the United States to the needed doubling of welfare expenditures, because this talk keeps alive the myth that through "economic opportunity" people can be gotten off welfare (into jobs).

The following analysis is in three parts: poverty, welfare, and unemployment.

## Poverty

The basic data about poverty is presented by Mollie Orshansky of the Social Security Administration in an article which is indispensable to any informed discussion of poverty; and it is the only indispensable report on the subject.<sup>1</sup> This article is based on data gathered by the Census Bureau in March 1964, and refers to the year 1963. The criterion for poverty is a refinement of the older "\$3,000" standard. The refinement takes into

account the size of the family, the cost of an "economy" level of food consumption (costing about three-quarters as much as the standard low-cost food budget), and the fact that farm families spend less on food. "The analysis pivots about a standard of roughly \$3,130 for a family of four persons . . . and \$1,540 for an unrelated individual." This results in a poverty profile representing fewer small families and more children. The data summarized here refers mainly to household units composed of families rather than unrelated individuals—but both are reported on and are carefully distinguished.

The poor, so defined and counted, number 35 million, of whom 15 million are under 18 and 5 million are over 65. Seven out of ten are white. The total is composed of 7.2 million families and 5.0 million individuals living alone or with non-relatives. The major facts are summarized in the following table, derived from two of Orshansky's tables:

The Poor (in 1963)

Characteristics	PERCENT OF ALL POOR HOUSEHOLD UNITS	
	Families	Individuals
non-family	90%	97%
white	72%	83%
husband and wife present	70%	—
female head (or female alone)	27%	70%
family of two (couples, mainly)	34%	—
head worked in 1963	64%	36%
full-time	50%	23%
(50-52 weeks)	23%	10%
part-time	14%	13%
head did not work in 1963	36%	64%

Labor Force Status of Head (March 1964)

head not in labor force	42%	—
head unemployed	6%	—
head employed	52%	—

Labor Force Status of Family Members (March 1964)

no family member in labor force	27%	63%
one in labor force	46%	37%
two in labor force	21%	—
three or more in labor force	6%	—

This information, supplemented by other information not tabulated here, shows the following general truths about the relationship between poverty and unemployment:

- Among white and non-white male heads alike, 6 per cent said they were without a job.
- Six per cent of male heads of poor families were unemployed; four per cent of female heads.
- Half the poor families were headed by an employed worker, 6 per cent by an unemployed worker, 42 per cent by a non-worker—someone not in the labor force. In the poor families headed by an employed worker, half of these heads had, in 1963, a full-time, year-round job—these families constituting 30 per cent of all poor families. One in six of all poor families was the family of a white male worker working full-time.
- Of all families in each region, poor families constituted the following proportions: 24.6 per cent in the South, 9.8 per cent in the Northeast, 11.5 per cent in the North Central, and 11.7 per cent in the West.
- Of all non-white families, 42.5 per cent were poor; of all white families, 12.0 per cent.
- Of the unrelated individuals, it is clear that most are aged women (widows), not in the labor force (not workers).

## Welfare

Turning from poverty to welfare, the general facts are these:<sup>2</sup>

cases of public assistance, 1960—4,050,814  
cases of public assistance, 1965—4,176,316  
These figures, like all public assistance figures, are very tricky, however. An unknown but probably insignificant proportion of these cases represent the provision of medical care or burial only—no cash. The people receiving such aid would be indigent, however, so there is nothing to be feared in using these statistics for present purposes. These cases of welfare may be broken down as follows (as of December, 1965):

Old-age assistance	2,127,179
Aid to the Blind	94,576
Aid to the Permanently and Totally Disabled	575,245
Aid to Families with "Dependent" Children	1,069,316
"General" (state and local)	310,000
	4,176,316

It is evidently safe to say that recipients of welfare (leaving out children, of course, who always get their money from a parent) are aged, widowed, or disabled. The term "widowed" includes those whose husbands are living but absent—they are financially widowed, which is of course the real meaning of the status of widowhood. None of the federally aided categories includes unemployed workers, except a small proportion of the AFDC category, as authorized by Congress in 1961 but picked up, as of 1966, by only 18 states. These are, presumably, states which authorize unemployed workers to use their "general" assistance. Most states (and counties) do not authorize unemployed workers to use "general" assistance—and have therefore seen no need to extend AFDC to unemployed workers. Nationally, of all AFDC families, only 7 per cent are headed by unemployed workers (fathers). As for "general" assistance in general, the Welfare Administration in Washington has no detailed data on the subject. Half of all the recipients of general assistance in the country are in five states—New York, Michigan, Ohio, Illinois, and Pennsylvania.

In general, therefore, there are very few unemployed workers on welfare. There is no U.S. program of unemployment relief and few of the states have such programs. In Maryland, to take one state that does authorize welfare for unemployed workers, the number of unemployed workers on welfare (in May, 1964) was 791, out of a total of 43,600 unemployed workers. Virtually never, in the United States, does an unemployed worker go on welfare—most states do not allow it and most unemployed workers in the state that do are not poor enough to qualify. But this takes the discussion to the topic of unemployment itself—unemployment as distinguished from both poverty and welfare.

## Unemployment

The first point about unemployment statistics is that they are just as tricky as welfare statistics—perhaps trickier. Frequently raised questions include these: do the figures come from the U.S. Department of Labor? Or do they come from the U.S. Census (in the Commerce Department)? If they come from Labor, are they restricted to the "insured unemployed" (those receiving



unemployment insurance) or do they include others? Other questions are raised later. The general answer to the above questions are these: the figures used here are from the Labor Department; they are *not* restricted to "insured unemployment;" they are approximately the same as Census figures; where the two differ, the Labor figures are frequently higher.

The *Triple Revolution Report* asserts that "official figures seriously underestimate the true extent of unemployment . . . It is reasonable to estimate that over 8,000,000 people are not working who would like to have jobs today as compared with the 4,000,000 shown in the official statistics."

The opposite comment is made by several authorities. European figures do not include many who are included in U. S. figures. Figures from Britain, Sweden, France, and Italy are based almost entirely on a count of registrants at the employment exchange. U.S. figures reach far beyond that.<sup>3</sup> Only half the unemployed in U.S. figures refer to workers who have lost their jobs; the other half refer to youth entering the labor market and women re-entering it.<sup>4</sup>

The real, but very special, problem of unemployed youth is systematically exaggerated in the official statistics because youth are included as unemployed when they are attending school full-time but are registered for an afternoon or Saturday job, or a summer job. A Labor Department publication states, without a hint of irony, that "the unemployment rate for those not in school was one-fourth higher than for those still in school . . . 7 out of 10 of the jobless youths aged 16 to 21 were no longer attending school."<sup>5</sup>

Many of those reported as unemployed are looking for part-time work only; this would include aged workers on Social Security and those "unemployed youth" who are attending school. The proportion of "unemployed workers" looking for part-time work in recent years was as follows: 1956-14.2%; 1958-8.6%; 1963-15.5%.<sup>6</sup>

While it is perfectly reasonable for students, housewives, and the aged to want part-time or full-time work, any figure for over-all unemployment which includes these categories greatly exaggerates the amount of real old-fashioned unemployment. The rates for married men living with their wives in several recent years are as follows: 1952-1.4; 1954-4.0; 1956-2.3; 1958-5.1; 1960-3.7; 1962-3.6.<sup>7</sup> In July 1966, the Labor Department reported that the rate for men 25 years of age and over was at the lowest level in 13 years-1.9 per cent. This represents, of course, full employment, since most of these unemployed workers are between jobs and are unemployed for fewer than five weeks.

"The United States rarely has known times of sustained low unemployment similar to today's. There is little in our experience to show us how to deal with a tight labor market over a long period . . . There is a real question now whether we can avoid serious inflation." So wrote financial commentator Sylvia Porter in the *Washington Evening Star*, on August 2, 1966.

These brief summaries of recent and current facts with respect to poverty, welfare, and unemployment suggest what every social worker knows (to exaggerate a little) and what no economist knows (to exaggerate a little)-that they are to a large extent three separate topics. It is not true that they all add up to the one and only social or human problem that economism can acknowledge and still stay in charge of-unemployment. Nor is it

possible to save the unstudied assumptions of economism by slipping back, in the face of the facts, to something called "underemployment." What there is, instead of unemployment, is thousands of workers (and their families) impoverished by low wages, especially in the South; thousands of widowed, disabled, and aged persons (non-workers, out of the labor force) impoverished by niggardly payments of welfare and social security; and thousands of youth, especially non-white youth, whose complex problem is made up educational, social, economic, military, familial, personal and other ingredients, a problem which is not being fully acknowledged when it is arrogantly swept under the rug of "unemployment." Better schools, with high-school scholarships, might be closer to the real needs of youth. And the aged, at the other end, are poorly served by the repetitious demand of the Triple Revolution for jobs-when thousands are in poverty on Social Security supplemented by Old-Age Assistance.

As for family income, as a right, unrelated to the current wages of any worker-what is that but welfare? And what's wrong with welfare? Everybody knows that various schemes are in the air for negative income taxes and other arrangements. But these are the roses of welfare called by other names. Welfare is said to be unpopular. Who says so? And is it unpopular among those who need it? And would it be so unpopular among those who pay for it if they knew that welfare almost never goes to an unemployed worker and that there is no way in the world to get rid of welfare through jobs, economic opportunity, re-training, and other irrelevancies? Welfare-including social security, medical care, school lunches, public housing, and all other grants to the poor, along with public assistance-is granted as a matter of right. The applicant is a claimant-and if he is eligible he cannot be denied. Most people in any community are *not* workers. Most income goes to people who are not currently earning it. Ask any wage-earner where his wages go. Income is family income-and the family may include grandmother and sick brother-in-law. It is families and family members, not workers aged 22-64, who have a right to a minimum income, whether or not their worker is currently living. The worker has a right to a job, and can appropriately demand that the full employment of current years continues, without depending to any significant degree on war industries. But the family income of the poor is substantially a separate topic, deserving of full acknowledgement and study and action, even if this requires that economism step aside in favor of sociologism.

#### NOTES:

<sup>1</sup>"Counting the Poor: Another Look at the Poverty Profile," *Social Security Bulletin*, January, 1965.

<sup>2</sup>*Social Security Bulletin*, April, 1966.

<sup>3</sup>Seymour Wolfbein, *Employment and Unemployment in the United States*, 1964, pp. 317-19.

<sup>4</sup>"The Unemployed: Why They Started Looking for Work," *Monthly Labor Review* (U.S. Department of Labor), October, 1965.

<sup>5</sup>"Labor Force Status of Youth, 1964," *Monthly Labor Review*, August, 1965.

<sup>6</sup>Wolfbein, op. cit., p. 312. The sudden increase is the result of a new attention to the careful reporting of this distinction between the full-time unemployed and the part-time unemployed.

<sup>7</sup>Wolfbein, op. cit., p. 301.

"While unemployment and poverty would be solved by the guaranteed annual income, the great imbalance between private and public consumption would be unaffected. It is through public work programs that we must seek new answers to our new problems. In the tradition of Galbraith, I argue that our society cannot afford institutionalizing the soil bank syndrome while the public sector of our economy is still suffering from anemia."



Gayle Southworth

## THE CASE FOR PUBLIC WORKS

By GAYLE SOUTHWORTH

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The last four decades of this nation's history have been packed with more trauma-producing events than any other similar period, not excepting the fratricidal strife of the mid-nineteenth century. The bright hopes for the future that abounded in 1929 were snuffed out and replaced with the despair and travail attendant to the Great Depression. The rather comforting, if naive, belief in the basic chivalry of nation-to-nation combat was smashed by the horrors of mechanical destruction, genocide, and the mushroom cloud. The proselytic faith which induced young American men to fight the "war to end all wars" and "make the world safe for democracy" withered and died in the heatless glare of the Cold War. The domestic Mt. Vesuvius, which is race relations, erupted, spewing bloodshed and property damage over Watts and points East. The young President, in whom so many millions of progressive Americans had allowed themselves to vest their hopes for a better world was obliterated by a ball of metal no larger than a pencil's eraser. Hundreds of thousands of American families felt, and still feel, the gnawing terror of limited war in Korea and Viet Nam.

On the surface the credit side of the national ledger is as bright as the debit side is dreary. The "slough of despond" which John Steinbeck's books portray so vividly has passed away. This nation emerged victorious from the greatest armed conflict the world has known, and the second greatest it will ever know. The economic insecurity of the Great Depression has yielded to the economic security of the Great Society. The 19th century Fabians who dreamed of Utopia would have been astounded by color T.V., the 25-hour-work week, and the three-car garage. Truly the Affluent Society has arrived, our cup runneth over. Yet, "there's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip." The possibility, indeed the probability of a dual society has been rather callously ignored by the prophets of affluence. The trumpeters of glory have muted, but not silenced the grim note of The Other

America. While it is the truth that "we never had it so good" it is less than the whole truth. The whole truth is that for millions of Americans the bright promise of the twenties has never been fulfilled, for millions of Americans the Great Depression never ended, for millions of Americans unemployment, fear, poverty, and humiliation are daily fare, for millions of America the "slough of despond" had and has no happy ending.

The citizens of this other America, the poor, the inadequately educated, the Negro, the American Indian, the farm worker, non-migrant as well as migrant, the victim of persistent unemployment and the resident of depressed areas can wait patiently no longer. The economic and political events of the first half of this century, cataclysmic as they have been, will appear as but a prelude to their agonized struggle for relief.

The oral recognition that this world is complex rather than simple is made so frequently that it not only holds little meaning to the hearer but indeed becomes nothing more than a glib cliché to its deliverer. This is doubly unfortunate for, perhaps more than any other people we Americans see things in bas-relief, we dwell in the land of either or; a land with no other inhabitants than ourselves. Even our residency is more a popular fiction than an established fact. Secondly and less obviously, those whom we lean upon for intellectual leadership too often forget that the simplicities of their theoretical models are self-imposed parameters, which ought not be carried unquestioned into the search for truth in a world where the requisite assumptions are seldom, if ever, met. Nonetheless, I should like to apply that glib cliché to the American economy.

\*If we as a group of people have had historically a guiding principle it has been Thomas Jefferson's "all men are created equal . . . with certain unalienable Rights" yet this principle has never been extended to twenty million Negro Americans.

\*In an "affluent society" with 74,000,000 em-



ployed, unemployment falls on 9.5 million Americans annually, and some groups have unemployment rates equaling in viciousness those which obtained in the Great Depression.

\*While we produce air conditioners, color T.V.'s, and new cars (etc. ad infinitum) to the point of redundancy, we are unable to buy sanitary streams, air which is breathable, or pleasant scenery. Despite John K. Galbraith's effort some nine years ago to advertise the disparity between public and private economic sectors, discouragingly little has been done to right the scale. Indeed there is ample evidence that the imbalance is worsening.

\*J. M. Keynes's disciples have presented us with a seemingly impossible choice between lowering unemployment at the expense of seeing our dollars devalued, on the one hand; and, on the other, achieving price stability only at the expense of maintaining "a reserve army of unemployed."

In the face of the above list, it seems no less asinine to continue to propagandize the efficiency of Adam Smith's "invisible hand" than its efficacy. Yet, this is precisely what we Americans insist on doing. In President Kennedy's unmatched phrase, "the great enemy of the truth is very often not the lie—deliberate, contrived, and dishonest, but the myth—persistent, persuasive and unrealistic. Too often we hold fast to the clichés of our forebears. We subject all fact to a prefabricated set of interpretations. We enjoy the comfort of opinion without the discomfort of thought."

Economists have in the past several years grown increasingly concerned with these and related matters. Poverty is not a new issue, but poverty within plenty is a seeming paradox, explainable only in the context of the cybernetic revolution. Suppression of minorities is not uniquely a 20th Century American trait but it has always before had the rationalization of economic necessity. In an affluent society the continued deprivation of the Negro and Indian must occur as an issue of practice rather than principle. This too is a direct outgrowth of cybernation.

In the light of a commonly held belief that cybernation will greatly reduce that part of the working force employed in production, shorten work hours and otherwise drastically alter man's traditional relationship to his job, economists (and scholars everywhere) have been casting about for a way out of the dilemma.

Among the suggestions which have appeared have been Leon Keyserling's minimum wage proposal, manpower retraining and relocation, and shorter week, share-the-work proposals. Without going into the merits, which are numerous, of any of these proposals, it would seem that they all miss the point, since they all deal with symptoms rather than cause.

A more notable solution and one which does not share the defect mentioned above is the guaranteed income or negative tax as it is frequently called. To facilitate discussion let me review the proposal as it was set forth by Robert Theobald who is the backer with not only widest public recognition but the highest level of ardor.

Sensing that the cybernation revolution would inevitably mean a vast outstripping of demand by supply accompanied by intolerably high unemployment levels falling heavily on non-white Americans and, according to our overseas critics, bringing about the tensions which lead America to wage war, Theobald has proposed cutting the

Gordian knot which ties income to work. In an economy of scarcity he suggests the rationale of the Protestant ethic is necessary if not desirable. In a society of abundance the grip of necessity loosens and the injustices which accompany the profit system become more and more intolerable and less and less justifiable. Since the freedoms of which we are so rightly, if obnoxiously, proud become meaningless without the purchasing power requisite to enjoying them, Theobald proposes guaranteeing unconditionally, as a constitutional right, an income sufficiently large to ensure "the pursuit of happiness".

That this proposal would deal quite well with our major economic problems as outlined above, is obvious. *Properly handled*, such a guaranteed income could eliminate unemployment receipt and the attendant social and psychological evils of a public dole. It would enable the Negro American and other minority groups to greatly speed up their obtaining actual as well as legal equality by aiding them to break free from the grasp of the vicious circle which is poverty.

No longer would our nation be denied the skills and genius of those among us too poor to purchase education. The unfortunate dollar orientation which our value system promotes could also be weakened, or even hopefully destroyed.

If indeed the guaranteed income can do all, or any, of these things, it may seem carping to point out its weaknesses. It may also seem an act of giving aid and comfort to the enemy, for certainly those Americans who insist that their economic theory remain intact in its pre-Hobsonian grandeur will welcome any and all arguments which may postpone acceptance of Theobald's proposition.

Guaranteed annual income, by itself, is not a cure-all, nor is it so intended. While recognizing this, its proponents have shut their eyes to its most serious deficiency. It can hardly come as a surprise to anyone conversant with the set of paradoxes which is 20th century America that our two most important economic problems are a group of impoverished people who cannot find employment together with a dearth of the facilities, goods and services, which their labor could provide. In 1957 John Kenneth Galbraith pointed out in his inimitably urbane style something which great philosophers and common people, (but not "educated people") had long known; we Americans have too much of some things and too few of others. It is this situation which will not be aided by guaranteed income. What can be done?

If the United States Government, cooperating closely with state and local officials were to establish a Public Works Corps, hiring at a sum above the Health Education and Welfare poverty floor all those unemployed and all those currently working for less, employ them in building hospitals and schools, creating recreation facilities, as nurse aids, apprentice social workers, playground supervisors, tutors for underprivileged and retarded children and similar tasks, the benefits would be numerous.

The Public Works Corps should be a flexible body capable of expanding and contracting to offset economic convolutions. It could absorb cybernetically-replaced workers either permanently or temporarily. It could offer stop-gap employment and income while a new higher paying skill or profession is learned. In those areas whose resources have been exhausted or are no longer in demand

the Corps could quickly and effectively prevent the drop of sales which mark a depressed region.

In the Thirties, in a crisis situation, Franklin Delano Roosevelt instituted two special projects which in present currency are conceived of as one and the same thing, but which were, in fact quite separate programs. I am referring now to the Works Progress Administration and Public Works Administration. Both these efforts are subjected frequently to acidic attacks from the far-right. Few words are spoken in their defense because the two are not commonly pictured, even by liberals, as having been separate projects.

The PWA was a well-organized, carefully managed organization with limited objectives and a cautious, capable administrator. Caution, however, was not particularly important to the 11 million unemployed. The WPA, on the other hand, was initially charged with too wide a scope of responsibility, given indefinite instructions and hopelessly handcuffed by behind-the-scenes political maneuvering. The resulting waste and inefficiency brought howls of protest from all quarters, right, left and center. Both the PWA and its administrator were ill-suited for the economic chaos that prevailed. Unemployment struck one of every four. Time did not exist for careful planning and personal supervision of all projects. The long delays which ensued were not designed to placate the demands for relief. Today under much different economic conditions careful planning and efficient administration would be desirable as well as necessary.

A Public Works Corps could also imitate some of the useful features of the CCC. An important difference would be that the PWC would pay a decent wage. More importantly, it would not be organized negatively to prevent unemployment, but positively to provide needed goods and services. No nation, then or now, could afford the leaf-raking, make-work projects of the WPA.

The outpouring of abuse has (unjustly) fallen on the heads of both experiments, so that today any proposal for public works, no matter how essential, encounters a wall of resistance. The reaction which John Kenneth Galbraith termed Depression Psychosis is evident in public works as well as financial speculation. Perhaps no other event contributed more to America's conviction that government projects are inefficient, corrupt feather-bed factories for minor as well as major officials.

It is this attitude which must be changed if America is to answer the challenge of democracy, for the great needs of our socio-economy today simply cannot be met in any other way than through collective activity.

Indeed, America has seen the value of public works programs in the non-industrialized economies of the world. Senator George S. McGovern in his 1964 book *War Against Want*, tells of using the food-for-wages program to provide social overhead investment. There is a curious irrationality in using public works to fill the deficiencies in private spending in Burma while refusing to do as much at home because it is "socialistic". The same curious logic, or rather illogic, exists in regard to economic planning.

The Office of Economic Opportunity's "Operation Greenthumb" which employs those over 65 in highway beautification is a step, but *only* a step, in the way we must go.

The Ad Hoc Committee on the Triple Revolution recognizes the importance of public works spending during the "transition" from an economy of scarcity to an

economy of abundance. Among the measures they propose are, besides public works, a greater emphasis on education, low-cost housing and development of a rapid transit system. Their insistence on both a guaranteed annual income and the more conventional programs seems to be taking both the high and low roads. It may be some measure of the Committee's confidence in their proposal. The dissension noted by Theobald and James Boggs is based on what as yet, is a faulty premise. *We do not have a society of abundance*- It is true that our productive capacity is great, but our surpluses are evidence more of a misallocation of purchasing power than any deficiency of it.

The society of abundance which Messrs. Theobald, et al see, is an optical illusion. On a global basis we cannot even *feed* everyone let alone grant them immunity from work. The tremendous advances in effective demand which will accompany the "revolution of rising expectations" and rapid industrialization mean that for the foreseeable future a "labor force soil bank" is as economically unsound as the present waste of manpower through unemployment, poverty, and illiteracy.

The question must be put: "How will the guaranteed income proposal solve these problems?" The answer becomes immediately obvious. Unemployment and poverty as problems will be solved. The latter will be eliminated and the former cease to matter. However, the great imbalance between private and public consumption will be unaffected. The consumer will still be "king." Whether he will exercise any more rationality in his expenditure decisions because the monkey of insecurity is off his back is certainly open to debate. No *a priori* argument that he will exists. In fact the buying binge that the *nouvcau affluent* would engage in could cause serious dislocation in the body economic.

Putting the forces, educational and legislative, of the liberal establishment on the line in a showdown fight such as would be entailed in establishing such a novel, even radical, reordering of the work-pay relationship, can be justified only if there is an excellent chance of winning a victory. It is in no wise defensible if the fight will not even approach the objective.

It is precisely through public work programs that we must seek new answers to our new problems. Private enterprise does not provide a vehicle to solve the economic issues of today. We need a modern, high speed conveyance for modern, high speed problem solving. That conveyance must be a Public Works Corps!

Such a program would have a cost, possibly a very large cost. A wage expenditure of \$4,000 per year for 8 million people<sup>1</sup> would cost 32 billion dollars, a staggering sum. However, not all of this could fairly be counted as a cost of the program. Current expenditures on unemployment compensation would be eliminated. Welfare and assistance programs could be cut. Savings could be effected by eliminating the fragmented, "shotgun" approach to fighting poverty. On a more positive note, much of the outlay would be returned in the form of greater economic efficiency, higher output of goods and services and a better balanced growth pattern. Increased income taxes would certainly offset a large share of the program's cost.

Welfare agencies would be permitted to focus their entire effort on serving those who for various reasons could not participate in a public work program. These

(continued on page 46)



"The great contribution of the *Triple Revolution Report* is its poignant presentation of the need for creative responses to the immanent changes of our society. The Report is convincing on this point in spite of important inadequacies. True, the Guaranteed Income offers a great opportunity for our society. Yet, it is hardly possible to justify it on the basis of the inevitability of over-production. Moreover, the Guaranteed Income cannot be expected to meet all the needs enumerated. There are other limitations on men which are as oppressive as the economic structure based on the job-income link. It is naive to assume that the Guaranteed Income will actually result in the freedom and creativity that is envisioned. Thus, while the Report might have proposed a variety of structural changes—more community organization, for example, or qualitative improvement in the education system—it unfortunately limited itself almost entirely to proposing changes in the structure of production and distribution."



Lowell  
Livezey

## THE KEY: "PEOPLE POWER"

By LOWELL LIVEZEY

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The *Triple Revolution Report* presents clearly the immense but often unnoticed significance of three inter-related developments of the present time. It describes the advent of cybernation, the combination of the computer and the self-regulating machine, and predicts that cybernation will have unprecedented impact on the job market and on the accepted process of wage payment. It considers the shift from conventional to nuclear weapons, and suggests that this has made a basic change in the framework of international relations. It presents the world-wide struggle for human rights and the uprising of the American Negro as the American manifestation of that struggle. And the Report shows the interrelation of these three "revolutions," suggesting that they require immediate governmental and private action, if the chaos toward which they point is to be avoided, and if the truly democratic society that they make possible is to be attained.

Unfortunately, it is quite possible that the weaknesses of the Report may obscure its strengths and temper its impact. While the Report's conclusions concerning the important trends in our society are probably nearly correct, they are often poorly argued and therefore can be easily dismissed by the mind which is reluctant to accept them. Moreover, in my judgment, the Report's proposals for action place the major emphasis in the wrong area. The most important of these proposals is a break in the income-through-jobs link, effected by a guaranteed annual income, which would give basic economic security to all, eliminate the fear of unemployment, and provide a distributive process which would be ap-

propriate to a society of abundance. The guaranteed income is probably a useful and timely proposal, but it will not meet the needs that the Report so effectively presents. The report is rightly concerned with the quality of life in an abundant and changing society, with ways of using the immense (it claims, unlimited) economic potential to attain a truly democratic order. The guaranteed income simply cannot play the pivotal role it is assigned by the Report, and the additional proposals offered in the Report do not seem to me to be sufficient to fill the gap.

The Report maintains that American productive capacity is increasing so rapidly that we are able to produce all the goods and services we need without the use of all available labor. Moreover, it continues, if we do not find ways to keep a significant number of people out of the labor force without reducing their buying power, we shall find ourselves with a rapidly-increasing proportion of permanently depressed people in our society—people who are unable to find work, because there is not enough work to go around, or because they are not qualified to do the work required. Yet, this group has no income without work, save the inadequate and humiliating welfare provisions available from public and private agencies. The Report rejects the commonly accepted economic analysis that proper monetary and fiscal management by government can assure reasonably full employment. It argues that the usual analysis assumes a scarcity of goods and services and a limited ability to produce them, while in fact the cybernation of our industrial system has so increased the productive capacity of natural

and human resources that scarcity is no longer a realistic assumption. Rather, our society now knows such abundance that want exists only because of inadequacies in the distributive process, not in the system's ability to produce. Since society cannot consume enough to use all potential production, it becomes impossible to distribute the total product on the basis of contributions to that production, that is, on the basis of work done or capital provided.

The concept of abundance is an elusive one, and it is somewhat difficult to determine precisely what claim the Report is making when it says that we have "potential abundance." Presumably, abundance exists when the actual level of goods and services is equal to or exceeds the desired level. Since many people have limited buying power, and because needs for public goods are not often represented in the market, the desired level of goods and services is not identical with effective total demand.

In order to make a discussion of abundance meaningful and precise, a consensus is needed as to the quantities of goods and services that might properly be considered sufficient. How many housing units do we need, and what is an acceptable quality? What is the minimal nutritional requirement for an American? What medical needs must be assured? I suggest that there is no such consensus by which we might measure the degree to which our society is actually or potentially abundant. However, I do believe that a great many services and facilities that are presently unavailable should clearly be considered needs in our society, and that these are so great that they cast doubt on the Report's claim that abundance is possible now or in the near future. Moreover, the statistics cited by the Report in support of this claim, while they can be supplemented, leave considerable room for question.

The key to the Report's analysis rests with the rapid increase in productivity (per man-hour) coupled with a high unemployment rate. It is true that the annual productivity increase in 1961, 1962, and 1963 of 3.5 per cent was sufficiently above the average annual postwar increase of 3.0 per cent that it suggests a rise in the rate of increase. This evidence is coupled, however, with two important questions: one, will productivity continue to increase at a rate similar to the increase of 1961-63; that is, will an hour of a man's time continue to produce more and more in larger and larger increments as the authors of the Report predict? Two, will the increase that does occur have the results claimed by the Report, namely that goods and services will be produced far in excess of the amount needed, and that because of this there will be a growing class of unemployed and unemployable people engaged in no personally ennobling or socially useful activity?

In response to the first question, it should be observed that during the two years following the writing of the Report, the annual increase in productivity declined to less than three per cent. Although since the beginning of 1966 there have been indications of a more substantial increase, the 1964 and 1965 figures suggest the possibility that the very rapid increases of the three previous years were, in fact, deviations from the trend rather than the beginning of a rapid increase that would continue for a period of years.

It should not be surprising if the former were the case, for new labor-saving equipment is unlikely to be applied to an industrial system at the maximum possible

rate over an extended period of time. Equipment that is in good working condition and that has not produced enough to pay for itself is seldom discarded to be replaced by new equipment, unless the difference in efficiency is very great. In addition, there is considerable reluctance on the part of both labor and management to replace men by machines. This often results in feather-bedding arrangements, severance pay, job retraining, and other provisions that reduce the profitability of automating production. Finally, rapid diffusion of innovation, which depends directly on investment in new equipment, depends indirectly on high expectations of future demand. Investment simply will not be made unless there is good reason to believe that the product of that investment can be sold at a profit. As the Report rightly indicates, the strength of future demand should not be over-estimated. Many people are consuming at a rate high enough that it is not likely to increase, and future increases in the spending on public needs would require a reorientation of values that is desirable but not assured. One implication of this is that we cannot depend too heavily on future demand to bolster employment, as the Report correctly states. But it should also be recognized that to the extent demand is weak, it will also discourage investment in new, labor-saving machinery, and therefore temper the increase in productivity. Thus, both current statistics and the nature of our industrial system suggest a basis for doubting that future increase in productivity will be as great as the Report predicts.

However, even if the increase in productivity remains at the average postwar rate of 3.0 per cent, the product of an hour's work will double about every twenty-five years—a highly significant increase. In view of the high present rate of consumption, the Report's conclusion that there is danger that too much may be produced does not seem unreasonable. Moreover, the Report's argument could have been strengthened by consideration of the degree to which the maintenance of demand is now dependent upon forced consumption in the form of excessive advertising, misleading packaging, and planned obsolescence. As Professor Galbraith wrote in 1958, "Outlays for the manufacturing of a product are not more important in the strategy of modern business enterprise than outlays for the manufacturing of demand for the product."<sup>1</sup> The need for want-contrivance may rightly be considered evidence of the "saturation" of the market. If it is true that our per capita consumption rate is unlikely to increase significantly in the near future, then the Report's concern about excessive production is justified, even if productivity increases only by the average rates for recent years.

We must now consider the evidence related to the second question suggested earlier: whether increasing productivity would indeed result in a great excess of goods and services and therefore in massive employment. In my judgment, there are a great number of ways in which increased future production could be absorbed by our society. Some will meet important and proper needs, while some of the future increases will be used for wasteful and destructive purposes.

Consider the future of military spending. While the Report quite properly cites the dependence of our economy on military and space expenditures, its prediction that this sector of the economy will diminish in the future is hopeful but dubious. Among recent international developments, the situation in Vietnam stands out in defiance of the Report's optimism that, due to the develop-

ment of nuclear weaponry, war will be considered less acceptable as a solution to international conflict. Unfortunately we are witnessing man's willingness to run the risks of limited war in a nuclear age, and we are increasing, rather than decreasing, expenditures in the military sector. This fact was much less clear at the time the Report was written than it is now. However, the trend toward heavy expenditures in the exploration and development of space seems to have been clearly established over recent years. Although it is impossible to predict the magnitude of potential expenditures in space, by government and eventually by private groups and individuals, it is wrong to conclude that spending in space will be a declining sector of the economy. It is my guess that increases in military and space spending could be large enough to absorb a great deal of the product resulting from increased productivity.

Potential expenditure in space is only one of a number of ways in which increased production might be used in the future. The Report itself recognized the need for massive increase in public spending. It proposes that at least 700,000 low-cost housing units be built, that at least 100,000 additional teachers be trained each year, and other measures be taken to build up our educational system, that two billion or more dollars a year be spent on public works, and that obsolete military bases be converted to appropriate peacetime uses. The Report is thus proposing solutions to actual needs which should be more fully recognized. I would suggest, however, that even a partial satisfaction of these needs would cut deeply into the potential overabundance which the Report predicts for the near future. If it is feasible to direct the resources of our economy toward the fulfillment of these needs, then this will help substantially to keep demand high enough to avoid at least part of the difficulties arising from rapidly-increased productivity.

We can consider our economy abundant only as long as we do not accept responsibility for unmet basic needs in other countries. Foreign aid is a part of an economy's total demand that determines the level of employment. To the extent that our giving aid increases, we shall be able to absorb the product of increased capacity.

Finally, the 38 million Americans whom the Report describes as impoverished must be provided for before the nation can consider itself abundant. It is for this purpose that the guaranteed income is proposed—that every American be guaranteed an adequate income as a matter of right, regardless of his productive contribution or lack of it. It is the Report's claim that our society is sufficiently abundant to afford such a guarantee, and if spending in other sectors is assumed to remain constant, it is probably right, although there is some question as to our ability to undertake the guaranteed income and still provide the much-needed public services and a responsible amount of foreign aid.

The predicted effect of cybernation on the job market, namely that unusable amounts of goods and services will cause a drastic increase in unemployment, becomes dubious in view of the extensive unmet needs that now exist. The Report properly states that unemployment was unacceptably high (5.5 per cent or more) throughout the early nineteen-sixties, and that because of under-employment, early retirement, and pure discouragement from applying for work, the employment situation is much worse than the figures indicate. It is right in saying

that a large sector of the population is presently missing out on the nation's prosperity. But it gives no convincing argument for the assertion that the crucial cause of unemployment is labor-saving equipment, or that the cause cannot be offset by increased use of needed goods and services, particularly those in the public sector.

The effect of cybernation on the job market will be tempered in two important ways besides those already mentioned. First, the decreasing costs and prices made possible through increased efficiency due to cybernation should facilitate expansion of industries in which cybernation takes place, enabling them to maintain or even increase employment as productivity increases. Second, as spending shifts toward the industrial sectors which are affected by cybernation most slowly, the effect of cybernation on average productivity throughout the economy will be lessened. This is happening in the present rapid growth of spending on services. During the years 1947 to 1962, for example, total employment in insurance increased from 430,000 to 760,000; and in air transportation the increase was from 82,000 to 180,000.<sup>2</sup> While industries such as these are not unlikely to be affected by cybernation, they will continue to expand by enough to maintain employment levels despite increased efficiency. Moreover, one of the most rapidly-expanding job fields is public services—teaching, nursing, social welfare work—and these are not likely to be eliminated by machinery. On balance it seems improbable that the worsening of the job market is as inevitable as the Report suggests.

I do believe, however, that the guaranteed income is a sound proposal, and that our society can and should afford it, even though our actual and potential affluence are somewhat less than the Report suggests. It is important to evaluate the likely effects of the guaranteed income, and to determine as accurately as possible the adequacy of the proposal in terms of its ability to meet the needs suggested in the Report. Ideally the guaranteed income would modify the existing income tax procedure so that people reporting incomes below a certain amount would receive a subsidy rather than pay a premium. The subsidy would be large enough that a person receiving no independent income would have a decent living. An incentive to earn independently would be maintained, since the recipient's subsidy would be reduced by only a fraction of his own earnings, and his net disposable income would always increase as his earnings increased. This would be a clear improvement over the present welfare system whose payments are normally reduced by the amount of independent earnings, making it totally unrewarding to work.

The guaranteed income would have important economic effects. It would redistribute national income significantly and thus give increased buying power to a large group of people whose buying power has heretofore been extremely limited. To make the income payments, larger tax revenues would have to be collected from individuals and families with high incomes, and/or from business. It is not certain, however, that tax *rates* would have to be increased if the gross national product would increase substantially due to increased spending by poor people. Most proposals for the guaranteed income are projected to cost between \$15 and \$20 billion annually, which would be partially offset by the elimination of present welfare programs costing about \$5.6 billion annually. The increased taxation would, *ceteris paribus*, probably reduce the level of investment through reduced savings and re-

duced expectations of net profit. However, the increased personal income would be in the hands of the poor who would spend a very high proportion of their income on consumer goods, thus increasing effective demand and contributing to a booming economy.

The second important economic effect is that the supply of labor available, especially for undesirable and poorly-paid jobs, would shrink. This is, of course, a goal of the proposal, to avoid the problem that results when the supply of labor exceeds demand. But there is an important transitional problem—possibly more than transitional—in the fact that as product demand rises labor supply falls, so that at least in important sectors the unit cost of products will increase dramatically. I agree with the assumption that is crucial to all guaranteed income proposals: that most men are naturally productive and work partly for reasons other than money. But when men do boring, “alienated” work, as many must, and when they work in deplorable conditions, as many must, they can hardly be expected to continue working unless the payment for the work is higher than the amount they could receive without working. The final results would probably be three: pay rates for some jobs (e.g. garbage collecting) would increase, with corresponding increases in costs and prices. Jobs that could be done more cheaply by machines than by men at increased wage rates would be automated. Finally, jobs that could be made more attractive by changing procedures in order to make the work seem more meaningful, or by improving working conditions, would be changed so that workers would fill them even though the opportunity not to work was available.

The most important contribution of the guaranteed income would result directly from the economic security it would provide for people of low or doubtful earning ability. The security of the guaranteed income implies a freedom that our present welfare system does not provide. Welfare payments are contingent upon the recipient's ability to satisfy the case worker—who from the recipient's point of view is a kind of inspector with power to cut off his sustenance. The guaranteed income would be unconditional. In short, the freedom of the marginal economic man would be greatly increased.

The security provided by the guaranteed income would undoubtedly have an important effect on attitudes and personal relationships among people now economically insecure. The freedom from the threat of being hungry and homeless is a necessary part of what Fromm called the “psychology of abundance,”<sup>3</sup> the set of attitudes most conducive to the humanistic values of love, faith, creativity, and initiative. Although hardship may on occasion bind people together, hardship coupled with the unlikelihood of finding solutions to problems is much more likely to create unbearable anxiety and tension. When a person knows his most basic needs are met he can afford to act spontaneously, to “take no thought for the morrow,” but simply respond creatively to the situation at hand. It is not certain that he will do so, but he will know less resistance to acting in the most humanistic manner. Thus, to the extent that envy, anxiety, and rigidity are phenomena associated with scarcity, the guaranteed income would create the possibility of richer, more spontaneous personal relations and more creative activities.

The contribution of the guaranteed income at this point is not unlimited. Love and spontaneity are not to be associated exclusively with affluent people; the middle and

upper income groups have their share of anxiety. Many people are threatened not by starvation but by loss of status among peers, by failure to attain a desired position in business or profession, or simply by the possibility of slipping from very comfortable to modest-thought-adequate means. The guaranteed income would make no difference to people whose anxiety arises from these causes, but only to people who are in danger of having their basic needs unmet. To them it is probably the crucial step to a decent life.

The *Triple Revolution Report* has suggested structural changes in society which its authors consider necessary if technological progress is to make possible a true democracy, “. . . a community of men and women who are able to understand, express, and determine their lives as dignified human beings.” The Report does not claim that its proposals are exhaustive or sufficient, and it is clear to me that they are not. The principal shortcoming of the Report is that it concentrates on economic and closely-related proposals but avoids possible suggestions concerning the political and organizational basis for society. It is important to realize that universal economic power, which might be approached through the guaranteed income and supplemented by the provision of additional services suggested in the Report, does not in any way guarantee the self-determination of people's lives. In spite of the fact that our social order is intimately linked to our economic order, the ordinary buying power necessary for personal uses does not enable the individual to play a part in many of the decisions that affect his life. In the words of the Report, “today, Americans are being swept along,” but not only, I think, by the “three simultaneous revolutions,” but by a host of developments resulting from the complexity of situations about which decisions must be made and from the increased importance of centers of power that are hardly approachable by the common man. The often-heard phrase, “You can't fight City Hall!” is indicative of the sense of impotence of a large part of our population, regardless of economic status.

The weaponry revolution is a good example of the kind of development that has led to this sense of impotence. The strength of our defenses, the present emphasis on the draft notwithstanding, is not so completely dependent on military manpower as it was prior to the development of nuclear weapons and high-speed, remote-control delivery devices. This means that the nation can become involved more deeply in international conflict, can be nearer the brink of actual destructive measures, without the people's general awareness, than it ever could before. Even limited wars depend heavily on destructive devices that use a minimum of manpower in relation to their destructive capacity. The training of enough foot soldiers to carry out a war completely at least served the useful function of warning the citizenry of the extent of its commitment. Second, the subtlety and sophistication of military devices, and the speed with which they can be dispatched, have rendered obscure the common man's understanding of the procedure, implications, and eventual effects of present-day warfare. This results in increased concentration of power in the hands of a few men in key military positions, in increased secrecy concerning operations, and in increased reluctance on the part of individual citizens to suggest and protest according to their convictions.

The awesome and distant relationship of the average



citizen to military undertakings is repeated over and over in other situations that concern him. City and regional planning groups take an increasingly dominant role in the determination of the physical characteristics—and indirectly, of the social and demographic characteristics—of most communities. Federal legislation and finance in education have immense influence on the character and quality of education across the nation. While this influence is normally in the interest of more progressive and higher quality education, an important side effect is that planning and control by the people served by education is less and less feasible.

This is not a statement of the case for decentralization of power, nor against “big government.” It is simply an observation that men will probably never accept the responsibility or take the initiative to “understand, express, and determine their lives” *if they do not think they can*. As Fromm said in *The Sane Society*,<sup>4</sup> “For while it is true that one must think before one acts, it is also true that if one has no chance to act, the thinking becomes impoverished; in other words, if one cannot act effectively—one cannot think productively either.”

The guaranteed income would help make self-determination possible for an important group of people—those who are utterly dependent economically—by affecting their concept of what they could do to control or change their environment. A typical attitude toward the poor is that they could “do something” if they wanted to, but that it is mighty hard to do anything for them without insulting them or making them even more dependent. While the last clause is not to be disputed, it is important to consider some of the reasons why the poor often do *not* do something. Usually, the poor person’s situation could get worse. The tenant could be evicted for demanding better conditions; the public assistance recipient could lose his payments for non-cooperation with the “system.” The holder of a job obtained through the political machine would probably lose that job if he protested the policy of the party, no matter how harmful that policy was to him. The security of the guaranteed income would make it much less likely that “things could get worse.” It is probable that the guaranteed income is a necessary prerequisite to political as well as economic potency for poor people.

It can not be emphasized too strongly that the guaranteed income and all the supplementary economic measures proposed by the Report can be no more than a beginning, a starting point for the development of a community decision-making process in which each person can have a significant and self-fulfilling part. I think it is reasonable to suggest that the key to this development is organization of people, although it may be true that our society is already over-organized. People have to have a commonly-accepted framework, common rules and procedures, in order to work co-operatively. In view of the “three revolutions,” the individual standing alone is probably as impotent as he believes himself to be. By co-operating with others who have similar concerns, he can attain power—power that might be misused, or power that may simply mean that the individual can determine the nature and quality of his own life.

The community organization work that is presently being undertaken in most large American cities will probably make a major contribution to the development of channels and devices through which people can work

together on problems and concerns that they consider important. Whether community organization is dependent on conflict tactics, as is that of Saul Alinsky, or not, its goal is to enable people to assert the basic human rights that a democracy is committed to providing. Through community organization, people are beginning to obtain their rights from those on whom they are dependent: from the landlord, the welfare board, the police department, from “City Hall.” As they demand their rights, they are learning their responsibilities; and they are learning that meeting responsibilities is a helpful means of obtaining rights. Most important, they are acquiring the skills of leadership and learning the procedures needed for co-operative effort.

I suggest that a massive expansion of the present community organization work would go far in meeting the conditions necessary for a society in which all the people determine the nature and quality of their lives to the maximum extent. The need for such efforts is illustrative of the inadequacy of the guaranteed income proposal.

Suburban and rural residents are not exempt from the impact, largely determined in centers of power outside their reach, of regional planning and development; of the construction of highways and the development of transportation systems, which are crucial determinants of the quality of life attainable for these people. Finally, all people are faced with questions of national significance: questions of conflicting theories of education, of alternative uses of resources, of the line between civil liberties and destructive license, and of alternative solutions to international conflict. Many people are concerned about these questions, but feel powerless, sometimes because their representatives are unresponsive, and sometimes because the crucial decisions are made by bodies which are responsible to the citizenry only by the most indirect and cumbersome means. The Report recognizes these problems, but it seems to me that its proposals offer no solution.

The need is not simply for information, analysis, and expertise. There is need for more effective, more constructive channels for participation, and for stimulating citizens to use them. The most common procedures of the present-day protest movement are distasteful to some; to others they seem unworthwhile because ineffective. But the chief weakness is that they provide little opportunity for dialogue, for rational exchange of ideas and concerns. Organizations of the people therefore should use existing channels when they fulfill the useful function of presenting important concerns to those in power; they should develop new means when those in existence are inadequate.

The *Triple Revolution Report* is addressed to those institutions, public and private, which have the capacity to effect the changes proposed. Its proposals were primarily for a change in the economic order, that is, for the relaxation of the requirement that men work in order to eat, and for supplementary measures of improved education and basic services for all. Although I have indicated flaws in the arguments with which the Report attempts to justify these proposals, I believe that the proposals themselves are sound. I also believe, for the reasons just given, that the Report’s proposals are so inadequate that they do serious injustice to the topics with which it is concerned. The Report suggests means of guaranteeing every citizen a minimal degree of economic power. Yet as I have shown, so many vitally

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## ASSAULT FROM THE LEFT: A MARXIAN CRITIQUE

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This essay will offer, chronologically, two general criticisms, a short critique of each of the “revolutions,” and finally, some comments on the Liberal outlook which serves as a framework for the Triple Revolution’s entire analysis. For it should be recognized that the document represents a very specific viewpoint—neither Socialist nor Radical—it is a *Liberal* viewpoint, and a *Liberal* document.

### Crisis Prediction

The first general criticism that can be made, an obvious one, is that Triple Revolution’s tone of impending disaster is, on the whole, quite fraudulent—perhaps not an intentional fraud, but a fraud nonetheless.

During recent years, many authors, speakers, and publications have prospered by offering shocking but scientific predictions of various sorts of calamities. A few varied examples come quickly to mind: the announcement by agronomists that America has lost two-thirds of its topsoil, dire predictions about life in fall-out shelters, the warning that organisms can accumulate enough poisonous insecticides to be fatal, the social problems of the Atomic Age, the Jet Age, etc., etc. But perhaps we should pick

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This example of Crisis Prediction is much more obvious than Triple Revolution, but it shows the pattern that has become standard. First, a trend is found and measured scientifically. Then the trend is projected into the future, showing that serious problems lie just ahead. And lastly, some concrete suggestions are made about how these problems can be avoided. Take another example—the population explosion.

Many writers take current demographic trends from various parts of the world, usually Africa or Asia, and they project these trends into the next 100 years, or 150 years, showing that the world’s land area will soon be inadequate to grow enough food for the projected population. But here again, Crisis Writers fail to mention those critical items—*limiting factors*. They don’t mention that the world’s societies have historically developed various institutions—late marriage, sexual abstinence, war-

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The guaranteed income would help make self-determination possible for an important group of people—those who are utterly dependent economically—by affecting their concept of what they could do to control or change their environment. A typical attitude toward the poor is that they could “do something” if they wanted to, but that it is mighty hard to do anything for them without insulting them or making them even more dependent. While the last clause is not to be disputed, it is important to consider some of the reasons why the poor often do *not* do something. Usually, the poor person’s situation could get worse. The tenant could be evicted for demanding better conditions; the public assistance recipient could lose his payments for non-cooperation with the “system.” The holder of a job obtained through the political machine would probably lose that job if he protested the policy of the party, no matter how harmful that policy was to him. The security of the guaranteed income would make it much less likely that “things could get worse.” It is probable that the guaranteed income is a necessary prerequisite to political as well as economic potency for poor people.

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fare, even infanticide and geronticide—which can stop a population explosion before it becomes critical.

And so, this essay's first criticism is that the situation which Triple Revolution predicts could never, in fact, occur. There could not be a time when many millions of unemployed would be living on dole while a few workers and managers would produce the goods. There are at least two major limiting factors which would come into play long before the document's fears could be realized.

The first limiting factor would be a recession or depression. Large-scale unemployment would mean that a country's power to consume would plummet. And it follows that a drop in consumption means that business is bad, production goes down, in short, depression conditions. And just as the economics of the Great Depression prevented the installation of new, efficient equipment, so would a new depression prevent the continuation of cybernation. The production of capital goods is the first casualty to bad business.

The other limiting factor would be the political power of the unemployed. When the weavers of England were displaced by textile machines, they went so far as to ambush the wagons carrying machines to the factories (The Luddite Rebellion, 1811-1816). They were successful in postponing their displacement for several decades. The United States, too, has a tradition of worker militancy. An industry that pushed automation too hard would be committing folly—they would be inviting resistance of a very serious sort.

Triple Revolution not only abuses history by lacking in *foresight*, it also commits an error of *perspective*. It may be that every generation of mankind sees its own time as being of greatest importance—and this sort of thinking is quite apparent in Triple Revolution. In fact, phrases like "mankind's historic conjuncture" and "new era of production" could hardly be exaggerated any further.

The manifesto says of the cybernation revolution: "Its principles of organization are as different from those of the industrial era as those of the industrial era were different from the agricultural." But this remains merely as an assertion, and it is difficult to find any criterion that might serve to verify this claim.

Agriculture centered around land as the means of production. There were landlords, and there were farmers. In the industrial era, emphasis shifted to capital goods: tools, mills, and factories. There were owners and there were workers. The cybernation revolution changes none of this. There are still owners and workers. Computers are another kind of capital good; they require labor for manufacture and they wear out. They are neither self-constructed, immortal, nor self-owned.

In terms of efficiency, the principles of cybernetic production are not different in *kind*, but only in *degree*. It is true that computers displace many workers, but so did power looms, and so did cotton pickers. And many individual cybernetic changes are less important than either of these. A cybernetic shipping department might displace three clerks, but a mechanical cotton picker might displace several families of workers.

There is no difference in kind between the displacement of 19th century Manchester millworkers and the displacement of 20th century Detroit assembly workers. And the strains of cybernation have not yet been serious enough to produce a Luddite Rebellion.

## Specific and Universal Problems

A second general criticism of Triple Revolution can be made without reference to the first. It is not a criticism of legitimacy, but of clarity.

It seems apparent that Triple Revolution is attempting to deal with two different kinds of problems, some *universal*, and some *peculiar* to the United States and Western Europe. And unfortunately, it is also apparent that the manifesto considers some of the *peculiar* problems to be of *universal significance*.

For example, the writers feel that cybernation has potential importance for the whole world. But it should be evident that a highly industrialized country with free enterprise is especially sensitive. In parts of East Africa, for example, where local authorities are still trying to persuade farmers to use oxen for plowing instead of using each other, the judgment of the relative merit of analog versus digital computers remains a rather academic question. And in socialist countries, where the increase in computerization can theoretically be balanced by a centrally-directed decrease in the work week, with no unemployment, cybernation is again not such a terrific problem. It is the context of free enterprise capitalism that makes cybernation so ominous in the West.

We should recognize that many of the world's countries are so far neither fully capitalist nor greatly industrialized. And if such countries choose a system of state economic planning rather than choosing to become subject to the laws of supply-demand economics, it is possible that the "problems of cybernation" can be avoided altogether. And when Triple Revolution suggests that cybernation itself *causes* these problems, it is like saying that gunpowder *causes* wars. Both gunpowder and cybernation pose crucial problems only in a specific context. For gunpowder, the context is war—for cybernation, the context is free enterprise.

Cybernation, like warfare, is not a *technological* problem, it is a *social* problem. This means that in order to understand cybernetic unemployment, for example, we must understand not only what computers do, but also *why* computers are installed.

From the point-of-view of the industrial planner, the "why" of cybernation is obvious. The installation of a cybernetic operation cuts the cost of production. The selling price can then be lowered, the market expanded, and profits increased. Cybernetic operations are installed because they are profitable. But this kind of planning is very short-sighted—because it does not recognize that a product must be sold *to* someone. And that this someone, this consumer, is also a worker. Each time a worker loses his job, a consumer is also displaced. But capitalist industrial planning continues to regard workers as a *cost*, while it regards consumers as a source of *income*.

And why should dislocation from a particular job mean absolute unemployment? The answer to this question can be found, again, not by reference to cybernation, but by reference to free enterprise.

In a free labor market, freedom of employment not only means that a worker is free to apply for work anywhere he chooses, it also means he is free to find no work at all. No one guarantees his right to work, neither industry nor government. A worker displaced by a computer is not a victim of cybernation alone, but of *cybernation plus profit motive plus free labor market*.

## Weaponry

Now that nearly 500,000 American soldiers are fighting in Vietnam, Triple Revolution's statement on weaponry seems remarkably naive: "We are recognizing only now that the great weapons have eliminated war as a method for resolving international conflicts." The final section adds the further hope that the development of "great weapons" will result in an international impasse and the stabilization of national boundaries. Obviously, this hasn't proven to be correct.

But it should be added that—even if the weaponry portions of the document had proved to be entirely correct and entirely predictive of future events—it is difficult to see why this sort of conjecture should be included in the same document with a consideration of the problems of cybernation. Admittedly computers are used in weapons, and many weapons are manufactured by self-regulating machines, but how are these facts related to those other social problems?

It is probably significant that none of the manifesto's nine proposals are directly related to weaponry. This would seem to indicate that, when it came time to draft a specific program, even the authors couldn't find a logical connection. But weaponry is related to those other social problems—but related in a way that Triple Revolution doesn't mention.

By now it is clear that the war in Vietnam has caused unemployment to drop in the United States. And, historically, this is not a peculiar phenomenon.

Using the 1955 rate as a base, government figures show that unemployment rose 40 per cent after the Korean War, peaked about 1960, but dropped 12 per cent between 1960 and 1965. Billions of dollars in new defense contracts have depressed the rate even farther in 1966. This connection between national welfare and national warfare has been pointed out many times.

This is the kind of fact that Liberals try to push to the backs of their minds, as if there were *really* no connection between war and prosperity—between death for some and affluence for others. This fact is ignored because it seems to imply that those who prosper somehow desire the destruction of those who die. But we can admit the connection without admitting such a motive. We can recognize that, even though the market for Phantom jets goes up each time another one is shot down, and even though business for the McDonnell Company is booming, this probably does not mean that McDonnell stockholders are conscious warmongers. But they are tied to an economic and political system that forces them to profit from warfare, even over their own objections.

It is also significant that this recent drop in unemployment has been accomplished without a great increase in the educational level of the previously unemployed—suggesting that the number of jobs available in the United States depends only on the requirements of the market, and not upon the educational level of the workers. This raises serious questions about Triple Revolution's Proposal 1, which states that a massive program of education will tend to decrease unemployment. The proposal should add that education is economically useless unless there is a job to fill. Education does not create jobs; *markets* create jobs.

## Human Rights

Just as it is difficult to understand the manifesto's supposed connection between weaponry and cybernation,

it is also difficult to see any meaningful connection between human rights and cybernation, or between human rights and weaponry. The document points out that Negro unemployment rates are double the rates of whites and this is, of course, a connection of sorts, but it is questionable that the fusion of these two problems sheds any more light on either of them.

This comment can be broadened into a criticism of the entire manifesto: *Triple Revolution's integration of the problems of cybernation, weaponry, and human rights is justified only if the problems are made more clear by the integration*. But this has not happened. What has emerged is a discussion of cybernation with adjunct discussions of weaponry and civil rights. The authors of Triple Revolution claim that there is a *functional* relationship between these three, but this is never demonstrated. It is legitimate, however, to group these three phenomena together, but not for the reasons given in Triple Revolution.

## An Analogy

Suppose that you asked the Chicago Cubs baseball team to name their "three major problems." They might reply that their three greatest problems were Gaylord Perry, Juan Marichal, and Bob Gibson. But this doesn't mean that these are *your* three greatest problems. It doesn't even mean that these are the three greatest problems over in the American League. It only means that for these particular men—in this specific context—these are the three greatest problems. And we can see that no harm to reason has been done—unless the Chicago Cubs claim that these are the three greatest problems *in the world*.

But this is what the writers of Triple Revolution have done. They have selected three major problems from their own context—the context of the United States and Western Europe—and then they have asserted that these are the three critical problems *of the world*. They have embellished their document with ambitious overtones of "universality" and relevance to "all mankind"—embellishments which are not justified. Only in *the West* are these the three major problems—and this is the basis of their real relationship: geographical proximity, not functional interdependence.

The drafters of Triple Revolution, despite the academic credentials of some of them, are victims of what sociologists call ethnocentrism. They have taken the problems of their own culture and have projected them onto the entire planet. They are in the position of the Protestant missionary who tries to convince New Guineans that the greatest problem facing them is the seeking of their personal religious salvation. The missionary is no doubt sincere in believing this. And his home congregation back in the States is probably just as convinced. But the whole group is making a *cultural* judgment.

The signers of Triple Revolution and the Liberals who have responded so enthusiastically are, in fact, feeding each other's ethnocentrism and, in the process, they are ignoring the broader problems that they ought to be considering.

## The Price of Liberalism

When it is finally recognized that the writers are not examining the *whole world*, but only Western society, it seems clear that their assessment of social ailments is. on

(continued on page 46)

"The recommendations of the *Triple Revolution Report* carry the seed of a healthy, sane, and creative society. Cybernation represents the hope of a better world, not only for America but for people throughout the world. The realization of these recommendations, however, will not come from the current leadership but from an educated, organized mass movement uniting white and black."



Fiona  
St. John

## CAN "CYBERCULTURE" SATISFY HUMAN NEEDS?

By FIONA ST. JOHN

Mrs. Fiona St. John has been interested in social problems since her teenage years, when, after growing up in the heart of the Chicago Black Belt, she was moved to plush surroundings in Westchester County, New York. For several years she was the national secretary of the Canadian Voice of Women, a peace organization. She lives in Palo Alto, California, and has five children.

In the subways of New York a hard-nosed question stares down at the passengers from the advertising cards overhead:

"WHEN THIS MACHINE LEARNS YOUR JOB, WHAT WILL YOU DO?"

To answer that question we need the explosive force of a great idea. It will surely come and the *Triple Revolution* can be the trigger which detonates it. For within the concept of the Triple Revolution is the germinal thought of continuous revolutionary change—coming now as a culmination of a long buildup of mankind's creative power.

Now in this era we as a people can project ourselves like a rocket into which we have built a continuous and endless series of explosive forces to carry us out on a great journey of self-discovery and achievements, here on earth and in outer space. But what will fuel our rocket? Without propulsion power our rocket is lifeless and we are only aimless crawlers, earthbound.

The guaranteed annual income is a starter as proposed by the Ad Hoc Committee responsible for the analysis and urgent demands of the Triple Revolution. This is the fuel. Without the certain knowledge that we have the right to live, how can we fix our thoughts and aims on far-reaching objectives and strive to realize the great potentials we have as a people and as persons? Without the assurance that food, clothing, shelter, medical care and education are theirs as a right, our children will grow up chained to the necessity of searching for the swiftly vanishing jobs to earn a living. They will always be clipt-winged eagles in a poultry yard, squabbling over chicken feed and wasting the strength of those golden early years.

Page Thirty-eight

Why do we hold the whip of economic fear over ourselves and our children? Perhaps in part because so many of the men who control our economy grew up in an era of scarcity. They cannot adjust to abundance.

We need to remind them that the guaranteed annual income is the modern equivalent of the provisions that viable societies have always made for their members within their capabilities. The Indian, Eskimo and African tribes shared the bison, walrus and elephant from the hunt as a right out of the same necessity we face. No one starved while the tribe had food. Begging was a respected vocation down through the middle ages and remains so in India today. Sweet and bitter charity took its place in industrialized nations and remains with us in "welfare." Social security was a long step with its provisions for sick benefits, unemployment insurance and payments in old age. Now we have added medicare. The guaranteed annual income is another stride forward. Without it millions of our citizens in the first nation to produce abundance are thrown back to the primitive hunting and gathering stage of early nomadic man, fearful for the next meal, malnourished, shorn of dignity and confidence in their powers.

It is obvious today as the stock market plunges down, prices zoom, interest rates fly up as inflation grips us, and millions of young and older people can neither build nor buy homes that a guaranteed annual income is an economic necessity to prevent the fatal plunge into the disaster of a great depression.

When the Ad Hoc Committee sent the Report to President Johnson March 24, 1965, they warned him in a covering letter that radical public measures were a necessity if our nation is not to "be thrown into unprecedented economic social disorder." The airline and

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the nurses strikes, Watts, Chicago, Harlem and Cleveland are only among the first outward proofs of the rising storm of unrest and protest of millions of Americans against the poverty, injustice and insecurity of their lives. Our government did not act and we are experiencing the beginning of the "unprecedented economic and social disorder." But we are as yet only on the fringes of the hurricane.

The effects of our national paralysis and failure to act to meet the needs of our people in the midst of the Triple and World Revolutions goes out beyond our nation and people to every corner of the earth. We could if we had enough intelligent self-interest and creative imagination, take the leadership in establishing a World Planning Commission to extend the benefits of cybernetics to every family not only here at home but everywhere on earth. That would require that our industrial leaders find ways to reconcile the conflicting interests of great corporations and work out plans to persuade the Board of Directors of General Motors, U. S. Steel, General Electric and American Telephone and Telegraph to give up short term profits to safeguard their long range growth and security. That some thinkers in business circles are beginning to face the problems which produced "The Triple Revolution" is evident in the analysis made by Dr. L. T. Radir in his article on "Automation: the Potential for Prosperity" in *Sperry-scope* in early 1964 when he wrote:

From a purely technical standpoint, we know enough to produce food for every hungry mouth . . . how to eliminate traffic jams . . . how to build virtually indestructible autos, washing machines, houses and other devices that will last a hundred years or more. We know how to rid the air of man-made pollution. We know how to build entire cities which are essentially water proof. Why do we not do these things? Today it is not economically feasible.

The authors of the "Triple Revolution" are saying that it need not remain so—that it is now an economic and human necessity that we find ways to meet the basic need of all our people and soon of people everywhere. They are urging us to see that the human right of people to have a decent life can and should and will determine what is "economically feasible."

Every discerning traveler knows that the Triple Revolution moves swiftly around the earth as an indivisible component of the World Revolution. The adventurous and disastrous plunge into Vietnam has blinded us to what moves the people of the major part of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Chandra, the chauffeur my friend met in Bombay, wants a good car of his own. His wife wants to live in a modern home. They both want good schools for their children. They are willing to work for them but if they must they will fight. They know that there is no chance to get these things from foreign rulers. They tried under Britain and they do not believe it would be any better under America as Mrs. Gandhi has made clear. They know from experience that Americans and Europeans want to buy their raw materials from them as cheaply as possible and loan them money at high interest rates, sell them manufactured products at the highest possible prices, and charge interest on the unpaid balances. They have watched the struggles of the African and Asian peoples to get control of their own countries so they could be in a better bargaining position when they sell their cocoa, sisel and rubber, copper and diamonds and when they buy trucks, tractors, cars, and radios. They see it is a little better since they drove the British, French, and Belgians out of direct political power and so forced them to bargain with native leaders, even though many of these top people are under European

Volume V, Number 37

control. The peoples striving to develop their economies know they could get better terms if they were both politically and economically independent under their own freely chosen leaders and could pressure them to raise the standard of living, steadily and swiftly.

This economic struggle is not the whole of it but it is basic to understanding the World Revolution and so to grasp the meaning of the Triple Revolution. The man and the woman in Bombay and Dar Es Salaam, Saigon, Jakarta, Havana and Caracas want a car and they are moving to get it now—not maybe in some distant never-never land or remote tomorrow. When mercantilism and capitalism broke the pattern of feudalism they dramatized before the peoples of the world that change is not only possible but can be good.

Few of the Negro families uprooted from the cotton and cornfields of the Carolinas or Mississippi who are struggling to survive in the ghettos in Harlem, Chicago, Watts or Oakland have ever heard of cyberculture but they awake everyday to the bitter realization that there are no jobs or a chance of a decent life for them, and they are struggling through the Negro revolution to change the injustices they suffer. They have no use for Norbert Wiener's book on cybernetics and society, *The Human Use of Human Beings*, because he makes no mention of them and the inhuman treatment given to them by the humans who decide and control what kind of lives shall be open to the black, brown, and yellow men and women in America. Their proper concern is for a cyberculture that can solve their problems and advance the general welfare. They want jobs with assurance of a guaranteed annual income when employment fails.

Every protest meeting, every outbreak of violence is their way of saying: *we are here*. In your plans for a better America count us in, give us our right to say what we need. We are here today and we will be here tomorrow. What do you intend to do about it? Do you want to see that we have the right to vote? To Negro representation in Congress, in state legislatures and county and city governments? Will you, the white people of the U. S., guarantee through our federal and state, county and city governments that colored citizens enjoy the same rights as white citizens? Will you demand human equality, dignity and decency equally for us with yourselves—in your own interests to protect your own standards and way of life? Will you see to it that the benefits of automation are distributed equally to all the people of the U. S.? Will you provide us with a guaranteed annual income or a job as our rights as citizens of the nation? These are the aims of our Revolution.

Their brothers, the yellow, brown and black peoples of Asia, Latin America and Africa are the spear points of the world revolution today because they must be. They are reaching for the daily necessities of food, clothing, shelter, education and medical care. They are organizing, demonstrating and fighting for self-government when they must because they want to live. They are everywhere in growing revolt against a world system which denies them the opportunity to use their own soil and their own bodies to produce the abundance they know is enjoyed by the industrialized peoples of Europe, Australia, New Zealand and North America. They are moving in a great but not yet fully conscious tide to get themselves the good things of life they can produce in their resource-rich lands through the automated factory system, mechanized agriculture, modern school systems, hospitals

Page Thirty-nine



and medical and health services.

The colored peoples around the earth see white men blocking their road in Vietnam, the Congo and Guatemala, counting on the advantage given us by the Weaponry Revolution. But everywhere the developing peoples of Asia are pressing against the barriers, remembering that the U. S. had the atomic bomb when Chang Kai Shek was defeated in epic battles on the mainland of Asia and driven to an island sanctuary defended by the Seventh Fleet. They are testing the new as well as the old weapons in Vietnam. They remember Cuba, too, and see it as a symbol of the right of small nations to make their own good life as they see fit. When they think and act so they are contributing to the world revolution against foreign domination as well as to the solution of their own immediate problems: a steady job with a living wage at a guaranteed annual income, a comfortable house, decent clothes, quality as well as equality in education, health care, ample recreation and full and equal representation in government.

The nine proposals in the Triple Revolution to "Develop programs for . . . (the) transition designed to give hope to the dispossessed, and those cast out by the economic system, and to provide a basis for the rallying of people to bring about those changes in political and social institutions which are essential to the age of technology" cover some major areas and make an important start in facing our national emergency.

If adopted they would open up jobs for many thousands of Americans, increase educational opportunities, provide new, low-cost housing, develop transportation, make more effective use of natural resources, regulate cybernation and bring trade unions forward to take other larger responsibilities. But they are limited to America which occupies some 5% of the land surface of the earth and has about 5% of the world population. We often forget that our America does not stand alone and could not exist independent of the peoples and lands that make up the major section of the earth outside our boundaries. Automation offers us very great, if transient, opportunities to speed up the industrialization of the earth. It may be argued we should start our efforts at home but it is already far too late to stop our positive efforts at our borders. We need the people and natural resources of the rest of the world as much as they need us.

When we ask ourselves, as Mr. Ferry does in "Further Reflections on the Triple Revolution," what will mankind do and be in a workless, fully automated, guaranteed income society, we can be ready with answers for the transition:

1. Mankind Will Never Tolerate a "Workless Society". True, we are and will use cybernation to eliminate all the repetitive, deadening work-to-earn-a-living jobs. But only a sick minority of people who are the unhappy victims of a sick society choose to do nothing. We can help these few find their way back to health. The history of mankind supports the Augustinian view of the desire of man to perfect himself and of his ability to improve his life. The concept of work will change but work will remain our chief means of realization of ourselves, a major source of satisfaction and joy, our reason for existence. The money incentive will fade out as production gives everyone abundance.

The ancient law of life that "He who does not work shall not eat" has outlived its usefulness and its passing

has dealt the final blow to the ancient enslavement of men by the elements and by a semi-civilized society. Man in a fully automated society will have a new freedom and work will have a new creative personal and social meaning. For the first time in history all humankind will freely choose the work they do and the conditions under which they do it.

For a long time to come we can be sure that many will prefer productive work because of the satisfaction it brings in making things for others. With short hours and social recognition for achievement, who can say the appeal will be less than the Peace Corps? With the incentive of a higher income, a four-hour day and a four-day week, and opportunities for creative leadership we will have all the applicants we need—and of the highest quality.

2. We will Multiply the Services We Offer to Each Other. We will offer everyone an opportunity to realize his life both as an individual and as a part of humankind through a great increase in the quantity and the quality of the service industries. Human needs in education, health, housing, the arts and recreation are endless and we are now only at the beginning of our exploration of these and other vital fields. Thousands of able young and older people are eager to prepare themselves to fill the openings that even now are urgently calling for teachers and research men and women at all levels in our rapidly expanding schools and colleges, for doctors, nurses and other health workers, and for specialists in housing, recreation and the wide field of culture.

Of course some of the work in these fields will be done through automation but there are limits to what machines can do. What these limits are we are about to discover but even the most enthusiastic advocates of cyber-culture do not foresee an end to the human need of people to do things for each other. No hospital or clinic is about to discharge its physicians, nurses and technicians. Automation increases the demand for librarians, teachers, research workers and brings new services unheard of today into being.

3. We Will Make America Beautiful and Every City a Work of Art. We will help work out international and national cooperative plans to turn our country and every country which chooses to do so into a garden-park for the happiness and joy of all its people. We can organize our people to make our country a land of beauty, and exchange labor and materials with other countries by mutual agreement in a great cooperative effort to transform the earth into a garden.

The thousands of international exchange projects under the auspices of the United Nations and those arranged between countries provide a basis of experience and example. The United States, the USSR and West Germany have all built roads in Afghanistan. The construction of the Aswan dam in Egypt is directed by Soviet engineers. Italy is now building a Fiat plant and France a Renault factory to step up production of cars in the USSR. Scientific and technical advances and production in the U. S. since our colonial days and down through the development of the atomic bomb have drawn upon the talents of European and Asian scientists and engineers. We all benefit from living in an interdependent world.

4. Women Will Win Opportunities for Full Development on the Basis of Equality and the Family Will Be Recognized as the Keystone of Society.

Economic security provided by a fixed income will free

women so that those who wish can combine a career with work as a home maker without overload or strain. Women will certainly demand the expansion of child care in nurseries, kindergartens and out of school child centers and a very short working day so that there will be ample time both to care for their children and husband and do their chosen work. Negro and other colored women who have been the chief burden bearers will make immense gains and enrich the nation and all those about them with their gifts.

5. Racism Will Be Ended and America Will Become a unified Multi-Racial Nation.

All who support the Negro Revolution are making America a richer, safer, more beautiful place to live. We are a troubled people who bear uneasily the daily injustices inflicted in our social order on all dark-skinned fellow citizens. The combination of a regular income as a right with full rights of citizenship answers the basic economic and political needs for all non-white Americans. It is a major step to equality. If we want our nation to survive, we will work to make these two aspects of the Triple Revolution a reality.

6. The New Weaponry Has Made War Obsolete. Bertrand Russell, Albert Einstein, Linus Pauling, and General Hugh Hester are only a few leading world figures who have pointed out that atomic and other weapons of mass destruction have made world war irrational. No group or nation can solve its differences with others or gain anything by exterminating each other. When we grasp and apply the fact that world war is mass suicide and build unity in the world to outlaw war, abolish all weapons of mass destruction and establish a binding system of disarmament, world peace can become a reality. Eliminating the vast economic and human wastage of war expenditures will underwrite a major part of the expense of offering every citizen a guaranteed annual income.

7. We Will Develop a New Creative Human Being and a Creative Society. We will open up the New Age of Creativity. This is the goal toward which the Triple Revolution and all constructive revolutions are leading—the Creative World Revolution which can give primary meaning to our lives. Creativity is a universal human urge. Parents and teachers know that every little child creates dances and songs and drawings and houses of its own and that creative expression persists until it is crushed out by the routine and deadening conformity of most schools and the neglect and standardization of our bureaucratic, too grossly mechanized society.

Now that we have through automation solved the problem of high—perhaps boundless—productivity, and abundance can be provided for hundreds of millions of earth's peoples, what will be the purpose of life and how will we use it?

Undoubtedly we will turn our imaginations and new scientific powers to developing advanced kinds of human beings, men and women who will solve the problems of cancer, heart disease, old age, and even death itself. We cannot yet foresee clearly what they will be, but we have known at least since the era of the great Greek civilization that few if any of us live under conditions which stimulate us to develop our talents.

We have never tried and so we do not know how far we can encourage the growth of well rounded, talented human beings in a creatively oriented society. The G. I. Bill of Rights in the U. S. and public support of education through stipends in the USSR and elsewhere have proved

it is possible to step up the educational level of a nation at a rapid pace. Talent scouts and special public secondary schools in music, dance, art and science have proved themselves effective in developing particular talents in special fields.

What Americans say and do in response to the proposals offered in the Triple Revolution can give direction and provide productive, far-reaching answers. What are the alternatives?

At a Harlem rent strike meeting James Baldwin answered for growing millions of Negro Americans:

"This . . . revolution has got to revise the entire system in order for us, as Negroes, to live, and in order for the country to survive. It connects with the condition of black and white people all over the world . . . And that is why the country . . . is . . . at the edge of civil war."

To delay—to expect wisdom in our emergency from the baffled and frustrated men who have brought us to the edge of the volcano is to invite certain catastrophe for ourselves and every family we know and love. Only recognition of our necessity expressed in organized mass pressure can force them to act for us.

Our hopes for powerful, *organized* peoples movement must rest on the forging of unity among all our black and white and brown Americans struggling for full economic and political rights of citizenship, for the Negro and other colored Americans, of our many national minorities, our peace workers, our spirited new youth, our intellectuals, our women, the millions of our deprived and oppressed and a reborn, socially responsible labor movement.

Such unity could rise if the socially concerned proposals of the Triple Revolution catch fire among the millions of Americans in these nascent groups. Will organized labor strike the spark and send out the rallying call to bring peace and a prosperous life to our nation? If not, who can?

## REPORT SIGNERS

Members of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Triple Revolution who signed the report reprinted on the following pages are:

Donald G. Agger, Washington, D. C., attorney; Donald B. Armstrong, M. D., Scarborough, N. Y., former vice president, Metropolitan Life Insurance Co.; James Boggs, Detroit, Mich., author of *Pages from a Negro Worker's Notebook*; Dr. Louis Fein, Palo Alto, Calif., computer consultant; W. H. Ferry, Santa Barbara, Calif., Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions; Maxwell Geismar, Harrison, N. Y., social critic; Todd Gitlin, Ann Arbor, Mich., president, Students for a Democratic Society; Philip Green, political science professor, Haverford (Pa.) College; Roger Hagan, Cambridge, Mass., editor, *The Correspondent*; Michael Harrington, New York, author, *The Other America*; Tom Hayden, Ann Arbor, Mich., Students for a Democratic Society; Robert L. Heilbroner, New York, economist and author; Ralph L. Helstein, Chicago, president, United Packinghouse Workers; Dr. Frances W. Herring, Institute for Governmental Studies, University of California, Berkeley; Brig. Gen. Hugh B. Hester, U. S. Army (retired); Alice Mary Hilton, New York, automation consultant; Irving Howe, New York, editor, *Dissent*; Everett C. Hughes, professor of sociology, Brandeis University; H. Stuart Hughes, professor of history, Harvard University; Gerald W. Johnson, Baltimore, Md., journalist; Irving F. Laucks, Santa Barbara, Calif., Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions; Stewart Meacham, Philadelphia, peace secretary, American Friends Service Committee; A. J. Muste, New York, secretary emeritus, Fellowship of Reconciliation; Gunnar Myrdal, Stockholm, Sweden, economist and author; Linus Pauling, Pasadena, Calif., scientist and Nobel Peace Prize winner; Gerard Piel, New York, executive secretary, War Registers League; Ben B. Seligman, Washington, D. C., Retail Clerks International Union; Robert Theobald, New York, economist and author; John William Ward, professor of history, Princeton University; William Worthy, New York, journalist.

## Report of The Ad Hoc Committee on THE TRIPLE REVOLUTION

This statement is written in the recognition that mankind is at a historic juncture which demands a fundamental re-examination of existing values and institutions. At this time three separate and mutually reinforcing revolutions are taking place:

**THE CYBERNATION REVOLUTION:** A new era of production has begun. Its principles of organization are as different from those of the industrial era as those of the industrial era were different from the agricultural. The cybernation revolution has been brought about by the combination of the computer and the automated self-regulating machine. This results in a system of almost unlimited productive capacity which requires progressively less human labor. Cybernation is already reorganizing the economic and social system to meet its own needs.

**THE WEAPONRY REVOLUTION:** New forms of weaponry have been developed which cannot win wars but which can obliterate civilization. We are recognizing only now that the great weapons have eliminated war as a method for resolving international conflicts. The ever-present threat of total destruction is tempered by the knowledge of the final futility of war. The need of a "warless world" is generally recognized, though achieving it will be a long and frustrating process.

**THE HUMAN RIGHTS REVOLUTION:** A universal demand for full human rights is now clearly evident. It continues to be demonstrated in the civil rights movement within the United States. But this is only the local manifestation of a world-wide movement toward the establishment of social and political regimes in which every individual will feel valued and none will feel rejected on account of his race.

We are particularly concerned in this statement with the first of these revolutionary phenomena. This is not because we underestimate the significance of the other two. On the contrary, we affirm that it is the simultaneous occurrence and interaction of all three developments which make evident the necessity for radical alterations in attitude and policy. The adoption of just policies for coping with cybernation and for extending rights to all Americans is indispensable to the creation of an atmosphere in the United States in which the supreme issue, peace, can be reasonably debated and resolved.

### INTERACTION OF THE THREE REVOLUTIONS

The Negro claims, as a matter of simple justice, his full share in America's economic and social life. He sees adequate employment opportunities as a chief means of attaining this goal: the March on Washington demanded freedom and jobs. The Negro's claim to a job is not being met. Negroes are the hardest-hit of the many groups being exiled from the economy by cybernation. Negro unemployment rates cannot be expected to drop substantially. Promises of jobs are a cruel and dangerous hoax on hundreds of thousands of Negroes and whites alike who are especially vulnerable to cybernation because of age or inadequate education.

*The demand of the civil rights movement cannot be fulfilled within the present context of society. The Negro is trying to enter a social community and a tradition of work-and-income which are in the process of vanishing even for the hitherto privileged white worker. Jobs are disappearing under the impact of highly efficient, progressively less costly machines.*

The United States operates on the thesis, set out in the Employment Act of 1946, that every person will be able to obtain a job if he wishes to do so and that this job will provide him with resources adequate to live and maintain a family decently. Thus job-holding is the general mechanism through which economic resources are distributed. Those without work have access only to a minimal income, hardly sufficient to provide the necessities of life, and enabling those receiving it to function as only "minimum consumers." As a result, the goods and services which are needed by these crippled consumers, and which they would buy if they could, are not produced. This in turn deprives other workers of jobs, thus reducing their incomes and

Page Forty-two

consumption.

Present excessive levels of unemployment would be multiplied several times if military and space expenditures did not continue to absorb 10 per cent of the Gross National Product (i.e., the total goods and services produced). Some 6-8 million people are employed as a direct result of purchases for space and military activities. At least an equal number hold their jobs as an indirect result of military or space expenditures. In recent years, the military and space budgets have absorbed a rising proportion of national production and formed a strong support for the economy.

*However, these expenditures are coming in for more and more criticism, at least partially in recognition of the fact that nuclear weapons have eliminated war as an acceptable method for resolving international conflicts. Early in 1964 President Johnson ordered a curtailment of certain military expenditures. Defense Secretary McNamara is closing shipyards, airfields, and army bases, and Congress is pressing the National Space Administration to economize. The future of these strong props to the economy is not as clear today as it was even a year ago.*

### THE NATURE OF THE CYBERNATION REVOLUTION

Cybernation is manifesting the characteristics of a revolution in production. These include the development of radically different techniques and the subsequent appearance of novel principles of the organization of production; a basic reordering of man's relationship to his environment; and a dramatic increase in total available and potential energy.

The major difference between the agricultural, industrial and cybernation revolutions is the speed at which they developed. The agricultural revolution began several thousand years ago in the Middle East. Centuries passed in the shift from a subsistence base of hunting and food-gathering to settled agriculture.

In contrast, it has been less than 200 years since the emergence of the industrial revolution, and direct and accurate knowledge of the new productive techniques has reached most of mankind. This swift dissemination of information is generally held to be the main factor leading to widespread industrialization.

While the major aspects of the cybernation revolution are for the moment restricted to the United States, its effects are observable almost at once throughout the industrial world and large parts of the non-industrial world. Observation is rapidly followed by analysis and criticism.

*The problems posed by the cybernation revolution are part of a new era in the history of all mankind but they are first being faced by the people of the United States. The way Americans cope with cybernation will influence the course of this phenomenon everywhere. This country is the stage on which the Machines-and-Man drama will first be played for the world to witness.*

The fundamental problem posed by the cybernation revolution in the United States is that it invalidates the general mechanism so far employed to undergird people's rights as consumers. Up to this time economic resources have been distributed on the basis of contributions to production, with machines and men competing for employment on somewhat equal terms. In the developing cybernated system, potentially unlimited output can be achieved by systems of machines which will require little cooperation from human beings.

*As machines take over production from men, they absorb an increasing proportion of resources while the men who are displaced become dependent on minimal and unrelated government measures—unemployment insurance, social security, welfare payments. These measures are less and less able to disguise a historic paradox: that a substantial proportion of the population is subsisting on minimal incomes, often below the poverty line, at a time when sufficient productive potential is available to supply the needs of everyone in the United States.*

The existence of this paradox is denied or ignored by conventional economic analysis. The general economic approach argues that potential demand, which if filled would raise the number of jobs and provide incomes to those holding them, is under-estimated. Most contemporary economic analysis states that all of the available labor force and industrial capacity is required to meet the needs of consumers and industry and to provide adequate public services: schools, parks, roads, homes, decent cities, and clean water and air. It is further argued that demand could be increased, by a variety of standard techniques, to any desired extent by providing money and machines to improve the conditions of the billions of impoverished people else-

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where in the world, who need food and shelter, clothes and machinery and everything else the industrial nations take for granted.

*There is no question that cybernation does increase the potential for the provision of funds to neglected public sectors. Nor is there any question that cybernation would make possible the abolition of poverty at home and abroad. But the industrial system does not possess any adequate mechanisms to permit these potentials to become realities.*

The industrial system was designed to produce an ever-increasing quantity of goods as efficiently as possible, and it was assumed that the distribution of the power to purchase these goods would occur almost automatically. The continuance of the income-through-jobs link as the only major mechanism for distributing effective demand—for granting the right to consume—now acts as the main brake on the almost unlimited capacity of a cybernated productive system.

Recent administrations have proposed measures aimed at achieving a better distribution of resources, and at reducing unemployment and underemployment. A few of these proposals have been enacted. More often they have failed to secure Congressional support. In every case, many members of Congress have criticized the proposed measures as departing from traditional principles for the allocation of resources and the encouragement of production.

*Abetted by budget-balancing economists and interest groups they have argued for the maintenance of an economic machine based on ideas of scarcity to deal with the facts of abundance produced by cybernation. This time-consuming criticism has slowed the workings of Congress and has thrown out of focus for that body the inter-related effects of the triple revolution.*

An adequate distribution of the potential abundance of goods and services will be achieved only when it is understood that the major economic problem is not how to increase production but how to distribute the abundance that is the great potential of cybernation. There is an urgent need for a fundamental change in the mechanisms employed to insure consumer rights.

### THE CYBERNATION REVOLUTION IS ALREADY HERE

No responsible observer would attempt to describe the exact pace or the full sweep of a phenomenon that is developing with the speed of cybernation. Some aspects of this revolution, however, are already clear:

- the rate of productivity increase has risen with the onset of cybernation;
- an industrial economic system postulated on scarcity has been unable to distribute the abundant goods and services produced by a cybernated system or potential in it;
- surplus capacity and unemployment have thus co-existed at excessive levels over the last six years;
- the underlying cause of excessive unemployment is the fact that the capability of machines is rising more rapidly than the capacity of many human beings to keep pace;
- a permanent impoverished and jobless class is established in the midst of potential abundance.

Evidence for these statements follows:

1. The increased efficiency of machine systems is shown in the more rapid increase in productivity per man hour since 1960, a year that marks the first visible upsurge of the cybernation revolution. In 1961, 1962 and 1963, productivity per man-hour rose at an average pace above 3.5%—a rate well above both the historical average and the post-war rate.

Companies are finding cybernation more and more attractive. Even at the present early stage of cybernation, costs have already been lowered to a point where the price of a durable machine may be as little as one-third of the current annual wage-cost of the worker it replaces. A more rapid rise in the rate of productivity increase per manhour can be expected from now on.

2. In recent years it has proved impossible to increase demand fast enough to bring about the full use of either men or plant capacities. The task of developing sufficient additional demand promises to become more difficult each year. A \$30 billion annual increase in Gross National Product is now required to prevent unemployment rates from rising. An additional \$40-60 billion increase would be required to bring unemployment rates down to an acceptable level.

3. The official rate of unemployment has remained at or above 5.5% during the Sixties. The unemployment rate for teenagers has been rising steadily and now stands around 15%. The unemployment

Volume V, Number 37

rate for Negro teenagers stands about 30%. The unemployment rate for teenagers in minority ghettos sometimes exceeds 50%. Unemployment rates for Negroes are regularly more than twice those for whites, whatever their occupation, educational level, age or sex. The unemployment position for other racial minorities is similarly unfavorable. Unemployment rates in depressed areas often exceed 50%.

These official figures seriously underestimate the true extent of unemployment. The statistics take no notice of underemployment or featherbedding. Besides the 5.5 per cent of the labor force who are officially designated as unemployed, nearly 4 per cent of the labor force sought full-time work in 1962 but could find only part-time jobs. In addition, methods of calculating unemployment rates—a person is counted as unemployed only if he has actively sought a job recently—ignore the fact that many men and women who would like to find jobs have not looked for them because they know there are no employment opportunities.

Underestimates for this reason are pervasive among groups whose unemployment rates are high—the young, the old, and racial minorities. Many people in the depressed agricultural, mining and industrial areas, who by official definition hold jobs but who are actually grossly under-employed, would move if there were prospects of finding work elsewhere. It is reasonable to estimate that over 8 million people are not working who would like to have jobs today as compared with 4 million shown in the official statistics.

Even more serious is the fact that the number of people who have voluntarily removed themselves from the labor force is not constant but increases continuously. These people have decided to stop looking for employment and seem to have accepted the fact that they will never hold jobs again. This decision is largely irreversible, in economic and also in social and psychological terms.

The older worker calls himself "retired"; he cannot accept work without affecting his social security status. The worker in his prime years is forced onto relief; in most states the requirements for becoming a relief recipient bring about such fundamental alterations in an individual's situation that a reversal of the process is always difficult and often totally infeasible.

Teenagers, especially "drop-outs" and Negroes, are coming to realize that there is no place for them in the labor force but at the same time they are given no realistic alternative. These people and their dependents make up a large part of the "poverty" sector of the American population.

Statistical evidence of these trends appears in the decline in the proportion of people claiming to be in the labor force—the so-called labor force participation rate. The recent apparent stabilization of the unemployment rate around 5.5 per cent is therefore misleading: it is a reflection of the discouragement and defeat of people who cannot find employment and have withdrawn from the market rather than a measure of the economy's success in creating jobs for those who want to work.

4. An efficiently functioning industrial system is assumed to provide the great majority of new jobs through the expansion of the private enterprise sector. But well over half of the new jobs created during the period 1957-1962 were in the public sector—predominantly in teaching. Job creation in the private sector has now almost entirely ceased except in services: of the 4,300,000 jobs created in this period, only about 200,000 were provided by private industry through its own efforts. Many authorities anticipate that the application of cybernation to certain service industries, which is only just beginning, will be particularly effective. If this is the case, no significant job creation will take place in the private sector in coming years.

5. Cybernation raises the level of the skills of the machine. Secretary of Labor Wirtz has recently stated that the machines being produced today have, on the average, skills equivalent to a high school diploma. If a human being is to compete with such machines, therefore, he must at least possess a high school diploma. The Department of Labor estimates, however, that on the basis of present trends as many as 30 per cent of all students will be high school drop-outs in this decade.

6. A permanently depressed class is developing in the United States. Some 38,000,000 Americans, almost one-fifth of the nation, still live in poverty. The percentage of total income received by the poorest 20 per cent of the population was 4.9 per cent in 1944 and 4.7 per cent in 1963.

Secretary Wirtz recently summarized these trends. "The confluence of surging population and driving technology is splitting the American labor force into tens of millions of 'have's' and millions of 'have-nots.' In our economy of 69 million jobs, those with wanted skills enjoy opportunity and earning power. But the others face a

Page Forty-three



new and stark problem — exclusion on a permanent basis, both as producers and consumers, from economic life. This division of people threatens to create a human slag heap. We cannot tolerate the development of a separate nation of the poor, the unskilled, the jobless, living within another nation of the well-off, the trained and the employed."

#### NEED FOR A NEW CONSENSUS

The stubbornness and novelty of the situation that is conveyed by these statistics is now generally accepted. Ironically, it continues to be assumed that it is possible to devise measures which will reduce unemployment to a minimum and thus preserve the overall viability of the present productive system. Some authorities have gone so far as to suggest that the pace of technological change should be slowed down "so as to allow the industrial productive system time to adapt."

*We believe, on the contrary, that the industrial productive system is no longer viable. We assert that the only way to turn technological change to the benefit of the individual and the service of the general welfare is to accept the process and to utilize it rationally and humanely. The new science of political economy will be built on the encouragement and planned expansion of cybernation. The issues raised by cybernation are particularly amenable to intelligent policy-making: cybernation itself provides the resources and tools that are needed to ensure minimum hardship during the transition process.*

#### 'MAN HAS 'UNQUALIFIED RIGHT' TO INCOME

Major changes must be made in our attitudes and institutions in the foreseeable future. Today Americans are being swept along by three simultaneous revolutions while assuming they have them under control. In the absence of real understanding of any of these phenomena, especially of technology, we may be allowing an efficient and dehumanized community to emerge by default. Gaining control of our future requires the conscious formation of the society we wish to have. Cybernation at last forces us to answer the historic questions. What is man's role when he is not dependent upon his own activities for the material basis of his life? What should be the basis for distributing individual access to national resources? Are there other proper claims on goods and services besides a job?

Because of cybernation, society no longer needs to impose repetitive and meaningless (because unnecessary) toil upon the individual. Society can now set the citizen free to make his own choice of occupation and vocation from a wide range of activities not now fostered by our value system and our accepted modes of "work." But in the absence of such a new consensus about cybernation, the nation cannot begin to take advantage of all that it promises for human betterment.

#### PROPOSAL FOR ACTION

As a first step to a new consensus it is essential to recognize that the traditional link between jobs and incomes is being broken. The economy of abundance can sustain all citizens in comfort and economic security whether or not they engage in what is commonly reckoned as work. Wealth produced by machines rather than by men is still wealth. We urge, therefore, that society, through its appropriate legal and governmental institutions, undertake an unqualified commitment to provide every individual and every family with an adequate income as a matter of right. This undertaking we consider to be essential to the emerging economic, social and political order in this country. We regard it as the only policy by which the quarter of the nation now dispossessed and soon-to-be dispossessed by lack of employment can be brought within the abundant society. The unqualified right to an income would take the place of the patchwork of welfare measures — from unemployment insurance to relief — designed to ensure that no citizen or resident of the United States actually starves.

We do not pretend to visualize all of the consequences of this change in our values. It is clear, however, that the distribution of abundance in a cybernated society must be based on criteria strikingly different from those of an economic system based on scarcity. In retrospect, the establishment of the right to an income will prove to have been only the first step in the reconstruction of the value system of our society brought on by the triple revolution.

The present system encourages activities which can lead to private profit and neglects those activities which can enhance the wealth and the quality of our society. Consequently national policy has hitherto been aimed far more at the welfare of the productive process than at the welfare of people. The era of cybernation can reverse

this emphasis. With public policy and research concentrated on people rather than processes we believe that many creative activities and interests commonly thought of as non-economic will absorb the time and the commitment of many of those no longer needed to produce goods and services. Society as a whole must encourage new modes of constructive, rewarding and ennobling activity. Principal among these are activities such as teaching and learning that relate people to people rather than people to things. Education has never been primarily conducted for profit in our society; it represents the first and most obvious activity inviting the expansion of the public sector to meet the needs of this period of transition.

We are not able to predict the long-run patterns of human activity and commitment in a nation when fewer and fewer people are involved in production of goods and services, nor are we able to forecast the overall patterns of income distribution that will replace those of the past full employment system. However, these are not speculative and fanciful matters to be contemplated at leisure for a society that may come into existence in three or four generations. The outlines of the future press sharply into the present. The problems of joblessness, inadequate incomes, and frustrated lives confront us now; the American Negro, in his rebellion, asserts the demands — and the rights of — all the disadvantaged. The Negro's is the most insistent voice today, but behind him stand the millions of impoverished who are beginning to understand that cybernation, properly understood and used, is the road out of want and toward a decent life.

#### THE TRANSITION\*

We recognize that the drastic alterations in circumstances and in our way of life ushered in by cybernation and the economy of abundance will not be completed overnight. Left to the ordinary forces of the market such change, however, will involve physical and psychological misery and perhaps political chaos. Such misery is already clearly evident among the unemployed, among relief clients into the third generation and more and more among the young and the old for whom society appears to hold no promise of dignified or even stable lives. We must develop programs for this transition designed to give hope to the dispossessed and those cast out by the economic system, and to provide a basis for the rallying of people to bring about those changes in political and social institutions which are essential to the age of technology.

The program here suggested is not intended to be inclusive but rather to indicate its necessary scope. We propose:

1. A massive program to build up our educational system, designed especially with the needs of the chronically under-educated in mind. We estimate that tens of thousands of employment opportunities in such areas as teaching and research and development, particularly for younger people, may be thus created. Federal programs looking to the training of an additional 100,000 teachers annually are needed.
2. Massive public works. The need is to develop and put into effect programs of public works to construct dams, reservoirs, ports, water and air pollution facilities, community recreation facilities. We estimate that for each \$1 billion per year spent on public works 150,000 to 200,000 jobs would be created; \$2 billion or more a year should be spent in this way, preferably as matching funds aimed at the relief of economically distressed or dislocated areas.
3. A massive program of low-cost housing, to be built both publicly and privately, and aimed at a rate of 700,000-1,000,000 units a year.
4. Development and financing of rapid transit systems, urban and interurban; and other programs to cope with the spreading problems of the great metropolitan centers.
5. A public power system built on the abundance of coal in distressed areas, designed for low-cost power to heavy industrial and residential sections.
6. Rehabilitation of obsolete military bases for community or educational use.
7. A major revision of our tax structure aimed at redistributing income as well as apportioning the costs of the transition period equitably. To this end an expansion of the use of excess profits tax would be important. Subsidies and tax credit plans are required to ease the human suffering involved in the transition of many industries from manpower to machine-power.
8. The trade unions can play an important and significant role in this period in a number of ways:

- a. Use of collective bargaining to negotiate not only for

people at work but also for those thrown out of work by technological change.

b. Bargaining for prerequisites such as housing, recreational facilities, and similar programs as they have negotiated health and welfare programs.

c. Obtaining a voice in the investment of the unions' huge pension and welfare funds, and insisting on investment policies which have as their major criteria the social use and function of the enterprise in which the investment is made.

d. Organization of the unemployed so that these voiceless people may once more be given a voice in their own economic destinies, and strengthening of the campaigns to organize white-collar and professional workers.

9. The use of the licensing power of government to regulate the speed and direction of cybernation to minimize hardship; and the use of minimum wage power as well as taxing powers to provide the incentives for moving as rapidly as possible toward the goals indicated by this paper.

These suggestions are in no way intended to be complete or definitively formulated. They contemplate expenditures of several billions more each year than are now being spent for socially rewarding enterprises, and a larger role for the government in the economy than it has now or has been given except in times of crisis. In our opinion, this is a time of crisis, the crisis of a triple revolution. Public philosophy for the transition must rest on the conviction that our economic, social and political institutions exist for the use of man and that man does not exist to maintain a particular economic system. This philosophy centers on an understanding that governments are instituted among men for the purpose of making possible, life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness and that government should be a creative and positive instrument toward these ends.

#### CHANGE MUST BE MANAGED

The historic discovery of the post-World War II years is that the economic destiny of the nation can be managed. Since the debate over the Employment Act of 1946 it has been increasingly understood that the Federal Government bears primary responsibility for the economic and social well-being of the country. The essence of management is planning. The democratic requirement is planning by public bodies for the general welfare. Planning by private bodies such as corporations for their own welfare does not automatically result in additions to the general welfare, as the impact of cybernation on jobs has already made clear.

The hardships imposed by sudden changes in technology have been acknowledged by Congress in proposals for dealing with the long-and short-run "dislocations," in legislation for depressed and "impacted" areas, retraining of workers replaced by machines, and the like. The measures so far proposed have not been "transitional" in conception. Perhaps for this reason they have had little effect on the situations they were designed to alleviate. But the primary weakness of this legislation is not ineffectiveness but incoherence. In no way can these disconnected measures be seen as a plan for remedying deep ailments but only, so to speak, as the superficial treatment of surface wounds.

Planning agencies should constitute the network through which pass the stated needs of the people at every level of society, gradually building into a national inventory of human requirements, arrived at by democratic debate of elected representatives.

The primary tasks of the appropriate planning institutions should be:

- to collect the data necessary to appraise the effects, social and economic, of cybernation at different rates of innovation;
- to recommend ways, by public and private initiative, of encouraging and stimulating cybernation;
- to work toward optimal allocations of human and natural resources in meeting the requirements of society;
- to develop ways to smooth the transition from a society in which the norm is full employment within an economic system based on scarcity, to one in which the norm will be either non-employment, in the traditional sense of productive work, or employment on the great variety of socially valuable but "non-productive" tasks made possible by an economy of abundance; to bring about the conditions in which men and women no longer needed to produce goods and services may find their way to a variety of self-fulfilling and socially useful occupations.

—to work out alternatives to defense and related spending that will commend themselves to citizens, entrepreneurs and workers as a more reasonable use of common resources.

Volume V, Number 37

—to integrate domestic and international planning. The technological revolution has related virtually every major domestic problem to a world problem. The vast inequities between the industrialized and the underdeveloped countries cannot be sustained.

The aim throughout will be the conscious and rational direction of economic life by planning institutions under democratic control.

In this changed framework the new planning institutions will operate at every level of government—local, regional and federal—and will be organized to elicit democratic participation in all their proceedings. These bodies will be the means for giving direction and content to the growing demand for improvement in all departments of public life. The planning institutions will show the way to turn the growing protest against ugly cities, polluted air and water, an inadequate educational system, disappearing recreational and material resources, low levels of medical care, and the haphazard economic development into an integrated effort to raise the level of general welfare.

We are encouraged by the record of the planning institutions both of the Common Market and of several European nations and believe that this country can benefit from studying their weaknesses and strengths.

A principal result of planning will be to step up investment in the public sector. Greater investment in this area is advocated because it is overdue, because the needs in this sector comprise a substantial part of the content of the general welfare, and because they can be readily afforded by an abundant society. Given the knowledge that we are now in a period of transition it would be deceptive, in our opinion, to present such activities as likely to produce full employment. The efficiencies of cybernation should be as much sought in the public as in the private sector, and a chief focus of planning would be one means of bringing this about. A central assumption of planning institutions would be the central assumption of this statement, that the nation is moving into a society in which production of goods and services is not the only or perhaps the chief means of distributing income.

#### THE DEMOCRATIZATION OF CHANGE

The revolution in weaponry gives some dim promise that mankind may finally eliminate institutionalized force as the method of settling international conflict and find for it political and moral equivalents leading to a better world. The Negro revolution signals the ultimate admission of this group to the American community on equal social, political and economic terms. The cybernation revolution proffers an existence qualitatively richer in democratic as well as material values. A social order in which men make the decisions that shape their lives becomes more possible now than ever before; the unshackling of men from the bonds of unfulfilling labor frees them to become citizens, to make themselves and to make their own history.

But these enhanced promises by no means constitute a guarantee. Illuminating and making more possible the "democratic vistas" is one thing; reaching them is quite another, for a vision of democratic life is made real not by technological change but by men consciously moving toward that ideal and creating institutions that will realize and nourish the vision in living form.

Democracy, as we use the term, means a community of men and women who are able to understand, express and determine their lives as dignified human beings. Democracy can only be rooted in a political and economic order in which wealth is distributed by and for people, and used for the widest social benefit. With the emergence of the era of abundance we have the economic base for a true democracy of participation, in which men no longer need to feel themselves prisoners of social forces and decisions beyond their control or comprehension.

*\*The view of the transitional period is not shared by all the signers. Robert Theobald and James Boggs hold that the two major principles of the transitional period will be (1) that machines rather than men will take up new conventional work openings and (2) that the activity of men will be directed to new forms of "work" and "leisure." Therefore, in their opinion the specific proposals outlined in this section are more suitable for meeting the problems of the scarcity-economic system than for advancing through the period of transition into the period of abundance.*

Page Forty-five



## Social Research and the Triple Revolution

(Continued from Page 18)

and economic development that encourage wide participation rather than grateful dependence, and of models for new political systems that emphasize bases for legitimacy rather than conditions for stability.

I hope that I have not given the impression that I regard as unimportant the various attempts at ameliorating the conditions of the American Negro and the developing world that are taking place within the existing institutional framework. While we must ultimately go to the roots—in response to all three of the revolutions that I have been discussing—I reject the position that anything less than a complete restructuring of our institutions is useless. Moreover, the complexities and contradictions of our system are such that there are already many activities under way—some of them sponsored by the federal government—that reflect the kind of radical thinking that I am calling for. Often, therefore, our problem is not to work against the system, but to support those forces within it that move in the direction of rational thinking for human welfare.

In conclusion, I would like to add one qualification that I consider important. I am not proposing that all social scientists devote all of their time to active participation in policy formulation, based on a radical analysis of institutional patterns. I am dedicated to the proposition that social scientists should feel free to pursue theoretical problems that arouse their interest, regardless of the social significance that such research might have. Similarly, I see great value in the participation of social scientists in activities related to the execution of certain policies by existing agencies. There are many ways of being a responsible and effective social scientist, and each individual must work within his own style and establish his own balance. What I am asking for is merely that our field as a whole provide a significant place on its agenda to radical thinking about our social institutions—in the context of the triple revolution—that activities deliberately directed toward the humanization of society be recognized as a legitimate part of the social scientist's role.

## The Case For Public Works

(Continued from Page 29)

would include the old, the young, the infirm, and female heads of family.

The many social benefits resultant from the vigorous application of such a program seem too obvious to warrant expounding on at any length. They include better health care and facilities, the end of the dole, equal employment opportunities, safer, cleaner recreation facilities and many others.

Unemployment as a social malaise would cease to exist. The pathology of poverty would no longer exercise its debilitating effect on young Americans. The economic drain which their failure to contribute economically has been, would be stopped.

Those firms who are paying wages below the socially acceptable level would be forced to compete (the excellent argument which Leon Keyserling made in *The Role of Wages in a Great Society* should effectively silence opposition on the basis of an inflationary bias in such

a proposal) thus removing the stigmata of the working poor.

The remaining cost of the program, however, can not, and should not be rationalized. Public works are a public good, which cannot be achieved without an economic cost. To say that the social cost of inaction is greater than the economic cost of action may be true, but that is a different argument. A Public Works Corps should not be presented as a costless cornucopia. The American public should instead be acquainted with the benefits; they will consider the cost a bargain, but it should not be hidden from them. Surely America can afford no longer the luxuries of poverty, unemployment and economic *apartheid*. The price of substituting the "discomfort of thought" for the "comfort of opinion" must be met.

### NOTES:

<sup>1</sup>This estimate includes 3.5 million unemployed plus 2 million underemployed plus another 2.5 million who would be attracted by the relatively high wages.

## "People Power"

(Continued from Page 34)

important events and decisions, from the perspective of the individual, simply are not expressed in economic terms that the proposed economic changes cannot come close to providing the ability to "determine their own lives as dignified human beings."

The development of "people power," which I consider necessary for democracy, will not be easy, for it is a threat to power as it now stands; it is a threat to all positions that depend upon other people's weakness. The operation of the Poverty Program is a good example. The requirement of "maximum feasible participation of the poor" has proven consistently to be in conflict with that of a "broadly based agency . . . including local government." It is safe to say that the latter requirement has normally been the more decisive consideration in the designing of local poverty programs. Voter registration in the South has met resistance of a similar nature, although in that case the sympathy of the federal government has been more clearly with the people acquiring the franchise. Thus, it is evident that the extension of direct influence to more people will meet resistance similar to that which has made the provision of economic power difficult.

In summary, I think the *Triple Revolution Report* argued rather poorly for very cogent points. The economic solutions it proposed should certainly be adopted. Yet the attainment of a truly democratic society will be dependent upon a much more massive redistribution of power, and a much more general popular concern about public questions, than can be attained through economic reform.

### NOTES:

<sup>1</sup>J. K. Galbraith, *The Affluent Society*, pp. 155-156.

<sup>2</sup>U. S. Department of Labor, pamphlet; Leon Blumberg, "Relation of Automation, Productivity, and Employment".

<sup>3</sup>Eric Fromm, *Escape From Freedom*; The Appendix includes discussion of the "psychology of abundance" as a part of Fromm's comment concerning Freud.

<sup>4</sup>Eric Fromm, *The Sane Society*, p. 191.

## Assault From the Left

(continued from page 37)

the whole, quite correct. The manifesto shows very plainly that the present institutions of Western society are incapable of dealing with the cybernation revolution. But it is odd that, after showing this inadequacy so clearly, Triple Revolution then backs down from making the recommendations that would naturally follow.

Many times the document seems to be on the verge of recommending socialism and socialist planning. It uses phrases like "redistributing income," "planning by public bodies" and "right to an income"—phrases which would be perfectly at home in a *socialist* manifesto. But these phrases are never consummated and, after suggesting that Western society has cancer, the document merely prescribes aspirin.

But the manifesto seems to recognize that its prescription is inadequate, so it tries to regain its integrity by adopting a tone of voice that is extremely radical and excited. *But a radical tone of voice is not a radical program.* And a loudly-prescribed aspirin does not do the job of major surgery.

Triple Revolution is a Liberal document because it seeks to work within the institutions of Western society

to try to solve the problems that it finds there. A Radical would say that the institutions themselves had *created* the problems, but Triple Revolution places the blame elsewhere. Instead of blaming the institutions, Triple Revolution blames the problems. Instead of examining the disease, it examines the symptoms. This is all strictly within the bounds of Liberal propriety.

Liberalism and Liberals have a way of buying off contemporary social critics. Liberals are willing to heap praise, popularity, and fellowships on any bright social critic who agrees to obey one rule—he must recommend the amendment of *existing* institutions rather than recommending *new* institutions. A critic who agrees to obey this rule, who agrees that Western institutions are indeed basically moral and capable of reform, reaps many benefits. He remains a part of the culture he criticizes; he is awarded a public platform and an attentive audience. But this *convinced* kind of Liberal Critic is not the only kind. There are also Liberal Critics whose private opinions are different from their public opinions—critics who *retain* their radical views but adopt a Liberal rhetoric "in order to be understood." The first kind of Liberal can only be regretted for his innocence, but the latter kind can be condemned not only for a lack of demonstrated *insight*, but also for a lack of *candor*.

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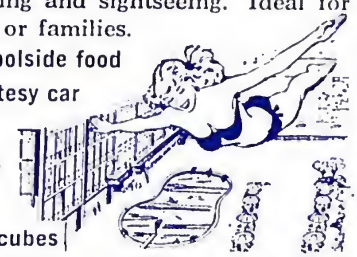
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